Faith-Healing

and

'Christian Science'

A. Feilding

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FAITH-HEALING AND 'CHRISTIAN SCIENCE'

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By ALICE FEILDING

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CHAPTER I

FAITH-HEALING

'Medical miracles have at all times been common.'—CARLYLE.

THE healing of the body by mental agency is a phenomenon which, generally under the direct auspices of religion, whether Pagan or Christian, has manifested itself from time to time from the earliest days of history. The influence of the mind on the body, although never frankly admitted as such, and only vaguely realised by religious devotees, has been made use of and treated as a manifestation of the mysterious and transcendent powers of the great Author of the Universe or of His unseen delegates. Some leaders of sects, recognising from their insight into human nature that it is through the cure of bodily ills that the masses can be most readily attracted and won to their

views, have made use of this uncomprehended influence of mind over matter. Like Simon Magus, the more carnal-minded of these leaders proclaimed themselves 'great ones,' and so reaped material advantage, while the devout gave glory to a Higher Power whose humble instruments they professed themselves to be. Experience everywhere teaches that those among the multitude in whom little yearning for spirituality normally exists, are, however, willing enough to endure exhortation if accompanied by miracle.

It is not here proposed to attempt anything like a survey of the history of these psychotherapeutic phenomena, for, although such would be full of interest, it is beside the purpose of this book. Let it then suffice to say that the record of all peoples, savage and civilised, teems with instances of supernatural or miraculous cures. At the altars or shrines of the Egyptian Serapis, the Greek Æsculapius, or the Christian saints and martyrs, a mysterious healing art has been practised in widely varied forms and attributed to equally varied sources. Nor has this faith-healing always

been of a strictly devotional character. A secular form, so to speak, familiar to readers of modern history, is that commonly known as 'Touching for the King's Evil,' which was so popular a remedy for scrofula, goître, and epilepsy in this and in Continental countries.[1] We first read of its being practised in England by Edward the Confessor in the eleventh century,[2] and it only became obsolete after the death of Queen Anne in the eighteenth.[3] The hard-headed Elizabeth is said to have been much averse to what she doubtless regarded as an ignorant and godless superstition, but she had nevertheless to conform to the practice, and, according to a contemporary account, her 'touching' was most efficacious.[4]

[1] It has been a disputed point as to whether this royal curative faculty originated in England or in France. The House of Hapsburg were also credited with the balsamic virtue. Laurentius, first physician to Henry IV. of France, derives the practice of 'touching' from Clovis, A.D. 481.

[2] This is recorded by William of Malmesbury, who wrote in the following century.

[3] Samuel Johnson was touched by this Queen in 1712, aged thirty months.

[4] William Tookes published a book (*Charisma*; *sive Donum Sanationis*) in Elizabeth's reign on the subject of cures effected by the royal touch. He vouched for these from personal observation.

This royal curative gift appears to have been at its height of popularity in the reign of Charles II., and the gay monarch 'touched,' according to the historians, near upon a hundred thousand persons during his twenty-five years of kingship.[1] It is recorded that the days in which the 'touching' was to take place were fixed at the sittings of the Privy Council, and were solemnly notified by the clergy in their parish churches. The sufferers who wished to present themselves to their Sovereign had to obtain a recommendation from the minister or churchwarden of their parish, these individuals being enjoined to examine carefully into the cases before granting a certificate. They then had often weeks

[1] Touching for the Evil appears to have increased greatly after the Restoration. In the first four years of Charles's reign nearly 24,000 persons were 'touched.' Regulations had consequently to be drawn up in Council (1683) concerning these 'Publick Healings,' which were appointed to take place in the winter for the avoidance of contagion. The King's surgeon wrote: 'I myself have been a frequent eye-witness of many hundreds of cures performed by His Majesty's touch alone, without any aid from chirurgery.'

James II. touched during one of his 'progresses' eight hundred persons in Chester Cathedral.

in which to cherish the expectation of healing, in itself so beneficial.[1]

Evelyn describes the quaint and solemn ceremony in vogue at his period thus is his diary (July 1660): 'His Majesty sitting under his state in the Banquetting House, the Chirurgeons cause the sick to be brought or led up to the throne, where, they kneeling, the King strokes their faces or cheeks with both his hands at once, at which instant a Chaplain in his formalities sayd: "He put his hands on them and healed them." This is said to every one in particular. When they have all been touched they come up againe in the same order; and the other Chaplaine kneeling, and having angel-gold strung on white ribbon on his arme, delivers them one by one to his Majestie, who puts them about the necks of the touched as they passe, whilst the first Chaplaine repeats: "That is the true light who came into the world." Then follows an Epistle (as at first, a Gosple) with the Liturgy, prayers for the sick with some alterations, lastly the blessing, and the Lo. Chamberlain

[1] *Psycho-Therapeutics*, C. Lloyd Tuckey, p. 26.

and Comptroller of the Householder, bring a basin, ewer and towel for his Majestie to wash.'

How impressive and how well calculated was all this to arouse and stimulate the mental impulses necessary in so many cases to give nature's forces the chance of righting themselves. The great part that temperament and imagination play in bodily conditions was recognised and pointed out by Villanova, the thirteenth century quack and alchemist, who wrote: 'It is all important that the physician be able to make proper use of men's temperaments, know how to win their confidence and affect their power of imagination: then can he accomplish any thing,' which truism Villanova's successors have not ignored or failed to take into account.

Referring to the 'royal touch' and its efficacy, Aubrey writes: 'The curing of the King's Evil by the touch of the King, does much puzzle our philosophers, for whether our Kings were of the House of York or Lancaster, it did the cure for the most part.'

Dr. Carpenter, alluding to this ancient superstition, writes: 'No fact of this kind rests

on a wider basis of testimony than the efficacy of the royal touch in the "King's Evil." Not only theologians of eminent learning, ability, and virtue gave the sanction of their authority to this belief, but some of the principal surgeons of the day certified that the cures were so numerous and rapid that they could not be attributed to any natural cause, and that the failures were to be ascribed to want of faith on the part of the patients.'[1]

The valuable truth 'want of faith' as the cause of failure was, we see, thus early recognised, though its great importance was not fully appreciated.

Another secular, but little known, faith-cure superstition is that one concerning the seventh son, who was popularly credited with special healing faculties. This belief was held in provincial England (particularly in the western counties) and in certain parts of France, and I doubt whether, in spite of universal education, it is yet altogether extinct in this country.

A seventh son was commonly called 'doctor' in recognition of this birthright, and that this

[1] *Mental Physiology*, W. B. Carpenter, M.D., p. 686.

faculty was not restricted to the one sex is proved by an inscription seen in 1851 on a window in Plymouth, denoting that a certain 'doctress' was 'the third seventh daughter.'[1]

This strange superstition was referred to as follows by Lupton in the seventeenth century in his *Notable Things*: 'It is manifest by experience that the seventh male child by just order (never a girl or wench being born between) doth heal only with touching, through a natural gift, the King's Evil, which is a special gift of God given to the Kings and Queens, as daily experience doth witnesse.'

In Ireland the seventh son was credited with the gift of prophecy as well as of healing, and although, according to some accounts, this kind of physician was a specialist for scrofula, some of them appear not to have been thus restricted, for early in this century there was a man in Hampshire, the seventh son of a seventh son, who had a large practice, and carried about with him a collection of crutches and sticks as trophies, these purporting to have

[1] See *Notes and Queries* for June 12, 1852, and Chambers's *Book of Days*, vol. i. p. 167.

belonged to persons whom he had cured of lameness.

The common healing formula was to 'stroke the part affected thrice gently, to blow on it thrice, to repeat a form of words, and to give a perforated coin or some other such object to be worn as an amulet.'

Most people will be able to call to mind instances of this same sort of simple and ignorant faith-healing. Who, for instance, has not heard of 'the old woman' who, in this or that neighbouring hamlet, was renowned for a mysterious wisdom in the art of curing or charming away such common diseases as the poor are most usually afflicted with?[1] Some concoction of woodland herbs picked at dawn and a cabalistic incantation were credited with the wonder wrought, but in *faith* really lay the active principle of the cure. In the days of the generation now passing away—a generation innocent of the vulgar smattering of cheap scientific knowledge, and simple enough to

[1] 'Old women,' says Brand in his notes on 'Physical Charms,' 'were always famous for curing warts; they were so in Lucian's time.'—*Observations on the Popular Antiquities of Great Britain*, Bohn ed., 1855, vol. iii. p. 276.

believe that when a promised result was duly obtained the cause thereof was such as it professed itself to be—this old wife practice was both popular and efficacious. Nor is this simple and ignorant form of faith-healing even now altogether a thing of the past. Recorded in the *Journals of the Society for Psychical Research* are several well-authenticated and remarkable instances of wart cures of quite recent date. I will quote three or four cases from its pages.

(1) The following statement was communicated to the Society for Psychical Research by the father of the subject treated, and is as follows :—

[*Dated November* 23, 1896.]

'My little girl was five years old in October last. The warts first appeared before she was a year old, and have been steadily increasing on hands and face. For over two years I have been trying various remedies, such as all the usual wart cures advertised and obtainable at chemists', as well as those recommended by friends, but without the slightest effect. In fact, I became so uneasy, seeing them increase

both in number and size, that I decided to ask our doctor's advice. He advised nitric acid to be applied, but in the course of conversation mentioned that a peasant in the locality had the reputation of being able to "charm" warts. On making inquiries I found he had completely cured several authentic cases, so decided to give him a trial before using any more external applications.

'Five visits, extending over a month, were sufficient to effect a perfect cure. The method was simplicity itself; there was no preparation beforehand, he never knew what day or hour my little girl would visit him; the first day he was cleaning out a stable when we arrived, and came up to the carriage to speak to us without knowing the object of our visit. He took the child's hand in one of his, while with the other he stroked her hand about six or seven times. During this process he was evidently repeating some incantation to himself, but did not mind interruptions; I noticed that he took no particular care to touch the warts themselves. The treatment each time only lasted a minute or two. I did not look

at the warts for about a week, and when I did was surprised to find that some had almost disappeared, while others showed signs of sinking. After that I observed the day after a visit a wart or two would have disappeared, but that between this and the next visit no very great change would take place. There were fully thirteen warts in all, and previous to my bringing her to this peasant I had for about six weeks given up any treatment. Now her hands are quite smooth, and not the smallest trace left of where the warts were.

'In reply to my questions, the man said he never had a failure, although large numbers come to him, many having warts as large as the top of his finger.

* * * *

'The peasant's name and address is John Kane, Ballyboy, Athboy, Co. Meath, Ireland.

'I shall be only too happy to answer any other questions. I may add that we were all extremely sceptical as to the result and were very much surprised at the cure, which was

as unaccountable as it was genuine.—Yours faithfully, C—— P. C——.[1]

'*P.S.*—I enclose doctor's certificate[2] that there are now no warts on my daughter's hands. I also enclose a statement from Miss D. W——[1] who some time ago had her warts cured by the same man.'

The statement of the lady mentioned in the above *P.S.* is very short, and also worth quoting *verbatim* :—

(2) [Address given]

'*November* 19, 1896.

'When I was eleven or twelve years old, I was greatly troubled with warts on my left hand, and hearing from several of a man named John Kane, who could cure them, I went to him, and after two or three turns the warts all disappeared, and I've never been troubled with any since. He merely

[1] The full names are given in the *Journal.*

[2] The doctor's certificate is as follows :—

'Athboy, Co. Meath, *November* 23, 1896.

'I certify that the hands of Miss E. M. C. are now perfectly free from warts.

'J. W. Grene, L.R.C.S.I., L.L.M.R.C.P.I.'

rubbed his hand over them a few times, and the warts seemed to wither away by magic.'

[Full signature given.][1]

Another well-attested case of similar cure by suggestion is quoted from a French scientific review[2] in another publication of the Society for Psychical Research:[3]—

(3) 'Dr. Gilbert, the well-known physician of Havre, desiring recently to test the efficacy of suggestion in the waking state to influence some pathological processes, took a boy of thirteen who had been brought to consult him for the warts which covered the backs of both his hands. They were so thickly clustered that there was hardly any clear skin to be seen between them, and the boy could not bend his fingers enough to hold a pen or even a knife and fork for his meals. M. Pierre Janet and some of the doctors

[1] See *Journal of the Society for Psychical Research* (Trübner), No. cxxxv. vol. viii., Jan. 1897, pp. 7, 8.

[2] *Revue Scientifique*, Feb. 4, 1893.

[3] See Article entitled 'Mind-Cure, Faith-Cure, and the Miracles of Lourdes,' by Dr. A. T. Myers and Mr. F. W. H. Myers, *Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research*, vol. ix. 1893-4, p. 196.

of Havre were gathered together to observe M. Gilbert's treatment and its results.'

The experimentalist's simple method was as follows: First, he excited the patient's wish to get rid of his trouble, and then he sponged his hands with coloured but unmedicated water, with the assurance that this process *must* have the desired effect. A week later, on examination, the warts had all disappeared with the exception of two or three, and these being treated in a similar manner, but with another coloured water which the boy was made to believe was a yet more stringent remedy, the last survivors gave way to the mental process, leaving the skin smooth and healthy.

I should like to quote one more instance of wart 'charming' from the pages of the Society for Psychical Research,[1] and preferably so in the contributor's own words; but as the account is rather lengthy I will abridge it, and merely state the bare facts of the case.

In September 1897 Miss H. M. Mason was officially inspecting some South Marylebone

[1] *Journal of the Society for Psychical Research*, No. cxlviii. vol. viii., April 1898, pp. 226-7.

children boarded out at Haselbury Bryan, Dorsetshire. She was accompanied by Canon Wheeler, the Rector, and by Miss M'Kee, a Poor Law Guardian of South Marylebone. The inspection took place in an empty cottage near the school.

Noticing that one of the children, a little boy of about nine, was terribly afflicted with warts, Miss Mason determined to try a charm experiment for their cure. 'It was the worst case of warts I ever saw,' she writes; 'they were so numerous, large, and prominent, that he could not avoid knocking and making them bleed.'

The charmer's *modus operandi* was simple enough. Placing a leaf under a brick in the empty fireplace she impressively assured the little lad that this procedure would cause his trouble to disappear, and that in three months' time he must ask Canon Wheeler to take him back to the cottage to see if the leaf were still under the brick: he would then find that his warts were gone.

The following December Miss Mason received a note from the Rector assuring her

of the successful result of her simple exorcism. The warts had entirely disappeared.[1]

Many other well-authenticated cases of cures similar to those just described could be given with full data, but I think further expansion on this subject unnecessary. The reader who cares for more evidence on this class of phenomena may refer to Dr. Hack Tuke's work, *Illustrations of the Influence of the Mind upon the Body in Health and Disease*, which is a mine of information relative to the physiological influence of mental states. The publications of the Society for Psychical Research also contain a large number of remarkable and well attested cases of psychic-therapeutics of varied character.[2]

Referring to warts in particular, the great

[1] Miss Mason quotes the Canon's note and a statement written by Miss M'Kee corroborating her description of the boy's warts. See *Journal of the Society for Psychical Research*.

[2] Refer particularly to the article in *Proceedings*, vol. ix., pub. 1894, entitled 'Mind-Cure, Faith-Cure, and the Miracles of Lourdes,' by Dr. A. T. Myers and Mr. F. W. H. Myers, where several very remarkable cases are given. See also the *Journal*, No. cxxiv. vol. vii., Dec. 1895, p. 172, which quotes a recent case of faith-healing reported in the *British Medical Journal* of Nov. 16, 1895.

authority just mentioned writes : 'The influence of the Imagination upon warts, trivial as it seems, is really a curious page in the history of this power as a curative agent.' The doctor then cites as instances two successful cases of mental treatment where physical remedies had proved unavailing.

The dictum of another medical specialist may be quoted before we leave this curious type of mind cure. Writing of the influence of Expectant Attention, 'pure and simple,' on the bodily functions, Dr. Carpenter [1] affirms that there is no more satisfactory example than that which is afforded by the charming away of warts : 'for the disappearance of these excrescences has so frequently occurred within the experience of trustworthy observers, in close connection with this *psychical* treatment, that we must disbelieve in the efficacy of *any* remedies, if we do not accept this.' [2]

[1] See *Mental Physiology*, by William B. Carpenter, C.B., M.D., LL.D., etc., 1891, p. 687.

[2] Bacon gives an account in his *Natural History* (xiv. 11. p. 73) of a wart cure which he himself underwent. The 'charmer' in his case was the English Ambassador's lady in Paris, whom he describes as a woman free from superstition.

A reason why such an unlovely specimen ailment has been chosen for exemplifying the potency of mental forces is that warts are so apparent that, as Dr. Tuke says, 'there cannot be much room for mistake as to whether they have or have not disappeared';[1] the experiment of 'charming' them away, also, is one that may be attempted with fair chances of success by anybody anxious for a personal demonstration of the efficacy of suggestion.

And now we may turn our attention to the faith-healing or 'miracles' of the Christian Church.

Here we find a practically uninterrupted succession from the earliest days of Christianity. The 'miraculous' gifts of the Apostolic age are generally reckoned to have lasted for only some three hundred years after Christ's death; but after this third century there is a fair record of cases of what may be described as genuine faith-cures. 'Such are recorded in the fourth century by Athanasius, Ambrose, Chrysostom, and Augustine; in the fifth by Hilary and Jerome; in the sixth by Gregory the Great,

[1] *Op. cit.* p. 365.

Augustine[1] of Canterbury, and by Cyril. From Gregory to the Reformation, Protestants are agreed as to the cessation of miracles. Indeed, this was the midst of the dark ages, when more trust was placed in dead bones and relics than in the living God, and many cures, very possibly real . . . were wrought by these means.'[2] The question seems to be rather this: Where and how is a line to be drawn between the cases of healing as practised by the Apostles and their immediate followers and the cures obtained in the Christian Church in later times?

By successive accretions and successive exaltations of the object of faith, religion came to lose its early simplicity; and hence, instead of simple dependence on God and faith in His power, prayer and worship at the shrine of some saint was substituted. The intercessions of this intermediary with the Most High were

[1] Augustine nevertheless wrote with remarkable prescience: 'Miracles do not happen in contradiction to nature, but only in contradiction to that which is known to us of nature.' It need hardly be pointed out that the common conception of miracles is that of a violation of the laws of nature.

[2] *Faith-Healing*, by A. T. Schofield, M.D., 1892, p. 15.

accordingly supplicated by the 'faithful,' these latter not venturing to address their entreaties except through what one might in plain language term an agent.[1] The traditions of the Roman and Greek Churches are loaded with marvellous accounts of 'miraculous cures'; cures ascribed to the touch of a holy man or the relic of a defunct saint; of worship at some shrine of special sanctity, or the draught of some peculiarly holy water.

In the thirteenth century the tomb of the pious crusader St. Louis, in the Church of St. Denis, was renowned for its miraculous properties;[2] also that of the mystic, Francis of Assissi; in the sixteenth century the shrine of Saint Catherine of Siena attracted large pilgrimages; in the eighteenth, the Jansenists flocked miracle-seeking to the cemetery of Saint-Médard, where the good Deacon Pâris

[1] 'Likewise, that the saints reigning together with Christ are to be honoured and invocated, that they offer up prayers to God for us, and that their relics are to be venerated' (Creed of Pope Pius IV., Art. 7). 'Holy Mary, Mother of God! pray for us sinners, now and in the hour of our death' (Angelic salutation). —*Roman Missal.*

[2] See 'Un Fragment de Médecine Rétrospective': *La Philosophie*, 1869, vol. v. p. 103: Littré.

was buried, he having been one of the shining lights of that persecuted Calvinistic-Catholic sect in life and their wonder-working apologist in death.

In our own time of critical inquiry and vaunted enlightenment, the members of the Roman communion resort in great numbers to various specially endowed centres of divine grace. To the most famous of these, Pyrenean Lourdes, sanctified only forty years ago by the visions of a young peasant-girl, thousands are annually carried in the 'White Trains.' To the little-known grottoes of Brive, in the picturesque sandstone crags of Corrèze, pilgrims of more local origin are likewise attracted by hopes inspired by its renowned thaumaturgic virtues, this revered site having been sanctified over six hundred years ago by the ecstasies of a Franciscan saint, Antony of Padua. Not far distant from Corrèze is another miracle-working centre, the rock shrines of Rocamadour, a quiet little place, rich in legends and in natural beauty. And yet another wonder-working Madonna there is worthy of mention in this part of France, the

'Black Virgin' of the little hill city of Le Puy, whose colossal statue crowns one of the remarkable rock pillars which are the chief features of this unique piece of scenery.

Two more Continental miracle-resorts may be named—Treves, where is reverently preserved the 'Holy Coat,' which tradition holds to be that seamless garment for which the Roman soldiers drew lots; and in North-Western Germany, between the Rhine and the Dutch frontier, there is the little town of Kevelaer, which owes not only its prosperity but its very existence to the shrine of the 'Mutter-Gottes,' described and made famous by Heine in one of his poems. The origin and sanctity of this place dates back to the year 1641, when Our Lady appeared to a poor man and his wife, and bade them cause a chapel to be built on what was then a barren heath. The heavenly command was obeyed, and for the last two centuries and a half multitudes have collected at Kevelaer in pious pilgrimage to its little 'Place of Grace' from Western Germany, Holland, and Belgium, and have, according to its records, derived liberal

rewards in bodily healing as well as in spiritual grace, in return for their prayers and offerings.

Then in our own country we have at Holywell, in North Wales, the miraculous spring of the martyred Saint Winefred, to which thousands still annually repair in search of health, carnal and spiritual. The origin of this Welsh cult, which is of very ancient date, is lost in unrecorded antiquity. The spring will anyhow have been a pilgrim centre for well over seven hundred years, for it is mentioned in a charter of 1150 as being granted by Henry II. to a neighbouring monastery.

The cures wrought at Saint Winefred's have at different times attracted a good deal of attention. They have been discussed in the columns of the press, and many remarkable testimonies have been published in support of the miracle virtue that is claimed for the holy waters, but these cures have proved on some investigation to have been wrought on affections in which the nervous condition of the sufferers was chiefly, if not, as in some cases, wholly, accountable for the trouble, and, in a large percentage of these cases, the improve-

ment or restoration to health has, alas! been but temporary, for, on the mental stimulus excited by religion and hope wearing off, the patient has relapsed to the former condition.

In Catholic countries of the Roman and Greek communions the walls of the churches are decorated with votive inscriptions, with small models of limbs in wax, in silver, and in less costly materials, and in some one finds even the crutches of the halt and lame, who, faith having made them whole, have needed them no longer.

It is hardly remarkable to find that this custom of decorating the sacred walls with tokens or memorials of gratitude for divine intervention and grace was practised in the classic days of Egypt and Greece, for, as the Preacher asked: 'Is there a thing whereof men say, See this is new? It hath been already in the ages which were before us.'

So the temples of Serapis[1] and of the gentle-

[1] Strabo has recorded the great reputation for healing enjoyed by a temple of Serapis, near Canopus, in his day. Pilgrims of all ranks assembled there, and the canal way from Alexandria, which was their route, was crowded day and night with the temple traffic. See *Geography of Strabo*, Bohn ed., vol. iii. p. 238.

hearted demi-god of the Greeks, Æsculapius, had, like modern Lourdes, their models and ex-voto inscriptions. Describing the temple at Epidaurus, Pausanias wrote [first century A.D.]:—

'Tablets stood within the enclosure. . . .

'On these tablets are engraved the names of men and women who have been healed by Æsculapius, together with the disease from which each suffered, and the manner of the cure.' [1]

One such slab in particular the historian mentioned, and this very one was discovered by P. Kabbadias a few years ago in excavating on the temple site at Epidaurus. This stelæ [2] records about twenty marvellous cures, nearly all of which are furnished with a short caption indicative of the subject-matter.

[1] Pausanias's *Description of Greece*, translated, with a commentary, by J. G. Frazer, in six vols., 1898, vol. i. book ii., chapters xxvi-xxvii.

[2] Stela, stéle, Greek, a post, a pillar; used archæologically for a sepulchral slab or column. In ancient times it also answered the purpose of a gravestone.—Hunter's *Encyclopædic Dictionary*. A full description of this slab is given in a most interesting article by the late Dr. A. C. Merriam, entitled 'Marvellous Cures at Epidaurus,' published in *The American Antiquarian and Oriental Journal*, Chicago, vol. vi. No. 5, September 1884, pp. 300-307.

This unique relic tells of how certain blind applicants received their sight; how the dumb spoke; the lame walked; how the paralysed Hermodicus of Lampsacus recovered the full use of his limbs, and how one, Eusippus, who had carried a lance-head six years in his jaw, was relieved thereof by the god during sleep.

Such ex-voto tablets had a twofold object. Not only were they the expressions of grateful recognition to the beneficent deity, but the sight thereof, combined with music, processions, sleep in the hallowed precincts (sleep attended by healing dreams contrived by the priestly attendants), and with a religious and mysterious environment, served to stimulate not a little in the patients a hope and sure expectation of cure.[1] Under any such circumstances the subtle force of suggestion is ever endowed with a potency which far surpasses the ordinary mental impulse that a purely and undisguised human method can attain unto.

[1] The Asklepieia were, as a rule, carefully situated on specially healthy, bracing sites; an eminence away from the crowded dwellings of men was chosen if possible. The chief centres of the cult were Epidaurus and Pergamon. There were several Asklepieia in Athens.

According to some recently discovered inscriptions, the cult of Æsculapius was originally based on miracle-cures and not on the medical knowledge of the Æsculapian priests, these latter having only studied therapeutics when popular faith in the former waned, it being to their advantage as well as to the divine credit to keep up the reputation of the health-giving site in the sacred olive-groves under Mount Tittheion.[1]

And now, after this somewhat lengthy digression, we may turn to Protestant faith-healing, whereof there is also abundance of testimony, notwithstanding the fact that these Churches were founded on criticism and on protest, and regarded the miraculous works of Catholicism with incredulity and abhorrence.

The simple and earnest Reformers and their followers were, however, convinced that Christ intended His disciples to heal the body as well

[1] Many Æsculapian votive bas-reliefs found at Athens are preserved in a chamber in the Acropolis. Within the last few years also some inscribed marbles have been discovered at or near Koulah, relating to the worship of the goddess Anaeitis, who was, according to these records, worshipped *as* a deity of healing. See *The Classical Review*, vols. iii. iv., 1889-90.

as to minister to the soul. Their doctrine on this point was practically the same as that of the Catholic Churches, but worked on different lines. Numerous passages in the Gospels were cited in support of this belief, but most notably those celebrated verses in the fifth chapter of St. James :—

'Is any among you sick? let him call for the elders of the Church ; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord : and the prayer of faith shall save him that is sick, and the Lord shall raise him up.'

This injunction was in most cases literally obeyed, as it is in the Roman Catholic Church to this day, though in the latter no longer with an expressed view to healing.

It may be said that miracle-cures or faith-healing only flourished in Protestant Churches in periods of religious revival or persecution—in times when the mystical elements of faith gained the ascendant, and piety saw in material or human methods a faithless disregard of the Divine Love and Power. The emotional and spiritual faculties of the devoted followers of some great leader being aroused by his teach-

ing, inspired by his delirious faith, and perhaps stimulated by persecution as well, a state of mental exaltation (in plain language, an hysterical condition) would be engendered, which, with a fervent belief in God's sure and direct response to prayer, would inspire the zealots with just that *confident expectation* requisite in many cases to work the wonder-cure sought. 'The power of religious ecstasy and absorbing religious contemplation, in all creeds and in all climes, to cause disregard of surroundings and contempt for physical suffering, need not be insisted upon,' writes Dr. Lloyd Tuckey, 'for its reality is attested by all history.'

The Waldenses and Moravians, heretics of the picturesque Middle Ages, are recorded as having held this tenet of a direct supernatural answer manifested to prayer. The fiercely persecuted Huguenots of the Cevennes, the 'Little Prophets' as they were nicknamed in England, also developed the miraculous gifts of healing and spiritual prophecy, these two often going together.

Then about this same period in England

the 'Friends,' or Quakers as they are more commonly called, likewise laid claim to these original gifts of the Spirit, and the founder of the sect, George Fox, wrought many faith-cures which are narrated in his Journal.

'Many great and wonderful things were wrought by the heavenly power in those days,' we are told, 'for the Lord laid bare His omnipotent arm, and manifested His power to the astonishment of many, by the healing virtue whereof many have been delivered from great infirmities.'

The following references from the Index of the Journal will best instance Fox's reputed powers: 'Miracles wrought by the power of God—the lame made whole—the diseased restored—speaks to a sick man in Maryland who was raised up by the Lord's power—prays the Lord to rebuke J. C.'s infirmity, and the Lord, by His power, soon gave him ease.'

Our next great Puritan movement, the Methodists of last century, also records scattered and occasional instances of miraculous interposition. Wesley himself firmly believed in

the frequent intervention of supernatural agency in the affairs of man. 'His journals are full of histories of ghosts, of second-sight, of miracles that had taken place among his disciples.' He gives an account of 'how a painful tumour, which had defied the efforts of physicians, disappeared instantly at a prayer';[1] how a poor woman, crippled by a severe fall, heard a voice within her saying: 'Name the name of Christ, and thou shalt stand,' and, on complying with the command was at once cured;[2] how a man, at the point of death by a violent rupture, was restored by the prayers of the Society, and continued for several years in health and in the love of God till he relapsed into sin, when his disorder at once returned and soon hurried him to the grave.[3]

Brief mention must now be made of a revival movement in the Lutheran Church somewhat akin to our Methodism, which flourished in Germany and in the neighbouring Scandinavian countries at the beginning of last century, for

[1] *Journal*, 1761. [2] *Ibid.*, 1756.

[3] *Ibid.*, 1757. See W. E. H. Lecky's *History of England in the Eighteenth Century*, 1892, vol. iii. p. 89.

it taught some mystical doctrines the practical outcome of which was a return to miracle or faith-cures.

'Pietism,' the name originally bestowed on this movement in derision,[1] was a spiritual awakening or quickening; a revolt against the formalism and the dogmatic theology of the Protestant Church. It was an attempt to put life into the creed-bound institution into which Lutheranism had degenerated, and to substitute for this starved faith a truly devout and practical Christianity. Its headquarters were at Halle, whose New University came completely under its influence, but throughout Germany it made a great stir and left a lasting impression.

One of the most remarkable features of this religious movement is that it influenced not merely the theological faculty, but others also of a secular character, notably the medical, which came for a time completely under its dominion. 'We are met here,' observes a Danish writer, who treats of Pietism with

[1] As was also that of 'Sophist' and 'Methodist' and others.

regard to faith-healing,[1] 'with the peculiar phenomenon that even the highest official representative of medical learning, the highly gifted Professor Stahl, a man who had rendered real service in natural science, and especially in chemistry, this man suddenly throws aside all the knowledge which had been gained from Hippocratical writings and new anatomical physiological discoveries, and replaces it with a religious mystical teaching, the practical outcome of which was a return to miraculous cures.'

I am reminded by this of a sentence in Morley's *Diderot*, where, with his keen insight into human nature, he remarks: 'Incredulity is sometimes the vice of a fool, and credulity the defect of a man of intelligence. The latter sees far into the immensity of the Possible; the former scarcely sees anything beyond the Actual.'

The Pietistic wave was succeeded by a rationalistic reaction; a reaction incited by the intellectual movement known as *die Auf-*

[1] See 'Mirakelkure,' by Julius Petersen. Published in the June 1898 number of *Tilskueren* [one of the most important Scandinavian monthlies: published at Copenhagen].

klärung ['Illumination'], and supported by the advance in natural science. Such Pietistic phases will, however, be ever recurrent; they are essential to the spiritual nature of man, for mysticism is a phenomenon which, in varied forms, belongs to all true inward religious life —to the most unemotional evangelical faiths as well as to the Catholic communions.

Two sects of quite modern date may now be mentioned in this connection: namely, the Mormons of the weird New World land of Utah and the 'Catholic Apostolic' followers of Edward Irving.

The visionist, Joseph Smith, Mormon Prophet and Seer, claimed about the year 1830 the possession of supernatural powers by which he could cast out devils and perform cures. These 'Latter-day Saints' made a special use of faith-healing as a method of gaining converts, and Dr. Buckley, an American writer who has made a special study of faith-healing, states that in working miraculous cures they were 'fully equal to Catholics or Protestants.'[1]

[1] See *Faith-Healing, Christian Science, and Kindred Phenomena*, by J. M. Buckley, LL.D., 1892, p. 35.

It is noteworthy that the founder of this strange Transatlantic faith, like the 'discoverer and founder' of 'Christian Science,' claimed to have been specially favoured with divine revelations of the 'path of life' and the way of salvation.

In the sect commonly known as the 'Irvingites,' we find that the heritage of the Apostolic gifts of prophecy, tongues, and healing was believed, in its early days, and some sixty years ago much notice and some ridicule was excited in the outside world at the reputed manifestations of these spiritual powers. The great preacher himself regarded disease as a form of sin, and taught that no one having sufficient faith need, or should, yield to it.

Many cases of cures by the laying on of hands and prayer are recorded, a notable one being that of a Miss Fancourt, the daughter of a clergyman, who had been a helpless cripple for over eight years. This sufferer had tried all known remedies, and the doctors had done their utmost for her, but, regarding her troubles as of an organic nature, they considered her case a hopeless one. All efforts, indeed, proved

unavailing, until she was prayed over by one of Irving's disciples, and immediately (according to her own account published in the *Christian Observer*, and also according to the public testimony of her father) she was enabled to rise up and walk, and recovered her health and the proper use of her limbs.

I wish that the limits of this chapter did not compel me to abandon the subject of divine-healing phenomena without an account of the systems in vogue to-day. It is possibly little known to what an extent this belief is held by certain parties of devout Christians who dissent in some particular points from the more formal and generally accepted modes of faith. Many no doubt have, however, heard of the 'Bethshans,' which have at various times recently created some sensation by the reports current of marvellous cures of the most malignant diseases, functional and organic. These testimonies include cases of recoveries from consumption, paralysis, cancer, tumours, spinal complaints, lameness, and blindness, etc.[1]

[1] A lengthy correspondence took place in the *Liverpool Mercury* in 1884 concerning these 'Bethshan' cures. These

And now, before closing this brief survey of faith-healing, let us glance at some of the individuals who have claimed to possess this psycho-therapeutic power in an eminent degree —men or women who have been credited by popular belief with a special gift of healing, this gift being generally supposed to be the outcome of a more spiritual understanding with the Almighty.

These individuals may be divided into two classes, thus :—

(i) Those who practised it in a truly devout, simple, and single-minded spirit; who laboured for love of God and His creatures, and not for gain.

(ii) Those, and perhaps the larger number, who practised for greed of what Timothy so justly described as 'filthy lucre.'

The distinction between these two classes is, however, one not always easy to draw, for it is

letters were reprinted in a twopenny pamphlet, entitled *Divine Healing*, by the City Literature Co., Newington. I have the pamphlet by me, but space prevents more than this brief mention thereof. An interesting chapter dealing with this subject will be found in Dr. A. T. Schofield's *Faith-Healing* (see chap. iii.).

in many cases hard, if not impossible, to distinguish the true motive-power and to gauge the genuineness of the wonder-worker's own belief in himself. Self-deception is, as we all know, a most common failing; and when the deception is one favourable to personal pretensions, is it surprising that it should take root the more easily?

I might head my list of individuals of the first class with a number of names from the hagiology of the Catholic Churches, but the embroidered accounts penned by clerical chroniclers of these saintly ornaments of faith, and of their miraculous works, can only be accepted *cum grano salis*, wherefore the beautiful legends, well founded on fact, no doubt, would be unsuitable here. The first instance I have chosen, then, is an Irishman of the time of the Commonwealth and Charles II., of whom much information has come down to us from contemporary writers, and who is perhaps the most famous thaumaturgist in our history.

Valentine Greatrakes, 'the Stroker,' born in 1629, was a landed proprietor of good income, a Protestant and a Parliamentarian. He served

in the Cromwellian army from the beginning of the Irish campaign till the year 1656, when the forces were disbanded. Taking then to county work, Greatrakes became a magistrate, registrar for transportations, etc.; but at the Restoration in 1660 he was deprived of all his offices, and devoted himself henceforth to a life of goodness and sincere mortification. Two years later a conviction was borne in upon him that he possessed the gift of healing the 'King's evil.' At first he was ridiculed for this notion, but after a few successful trials of his power he gained such a reputation that people came to him from all parts of the country for the curative ministrations, for which he accepted no remuneration. Three days in every week he set aside for the exercise of his humane practice. His procedure was purely apostolic, and, according to Dean Rust, resembled a religious ceremony. Laying his hands on the diseased parts, he said: 'God Almighty heal thee for His mercy's sake'; and when the patients professed themselves benefited by this simple treatment, the healer devoutly bade them give God the praise.

Greatrakes deprecated the description of his cures as miraculous, but admitted that 'he had reason to believe that there was something in it of an extraordinary gift of God.'

Concerning his works, the Bishop of Dromore testified as follows from personal knowledge. 'I have seen pains strangely fly before his hands, till he had chased them out of the body; dimness cleared, and deafness cured by his touch. Twenty persons at several times, in fits of the falling sickness, were in two or three minutes brought to themselves. . . . Running sores of the "King's evil" were dried up; grievous sores of many months' date in a few days healed, cancerous knots dissolved,' etc.

At first Greatrakes had only dealt with cases of scrofula, but the ague becoming frequent in the neighbourhood, he felt impressed to cure it, and succeeded, to his own astonishment. After this he extended his practice to all kinds of complaints, and cured great numbers, but not all.

In 1666, yielding to the persuasions of the Earl of Orrery, who had been 'the Stroker's'

military chief, Greatrakes came over to England and practised in Worcester and in London with more than fair success. He was, however, assailed by all sorts of calumnies, and published therefore in vindication and self-defence an account of all whom he had cured, with the names and addresses of his patients before leaving England. 'Besides this, the most distinguished men, physicians and others, attested from personal knowledge the reality of his cures.'[1] Greatrakes died, at the age of fifty-four, in 1683.

Some Continental healers of renown who lived in the end of last century and in the first half of this now claim notice.

Joseph Gassner, a Roman Catholic priest, was born in Swabia in the year 1727. His faith-healing works began when he was priest at Klösterle in Bohemia in 1758. Great multitudes were attracted to the quiet little town by his reputation, the sick coming in such numbers from Swabia, Tyrol, and even

[1] *History of the Supernatural*, Will. Howitt, vol. ii. p. 152. I am chiefly indebted for this account of Greatrakes to W. Howitt's *History*, and to the article on this healer in the *Dictionary of National Biography*.

Switzerland, that tents had to be pitched for their accommodation.

After some years spent in charitable and spiritual ministrations at Klösterle, Gassner removed to Regensburg under the special patronage of his Bishop and the Austrian Government. Here he continued his curative practice, and met with his former success until Mesmer's advent. This quack, coming at the Grand Duke of Bavaria's invitation, professed to expound the priest's miracles, which he attributed to the influence of 'animal magnetism,' and not to divine intervention. Gassner's method, it may be mentioned, was partly religious exaltation induced in the subject and partly manipulation.[1]

We now come to a princely healer, also a cleric in the Roman Church, Prince Alexander of Hohenlohe - Waldenburg - Schillingsfurst, Archbishop and Grand Provost of Grosswardein, Hungary, Abbot of St. Michael's,

[1] *Geschichte der Magie*, von Dr. Joseph Ennemoser, Leipzig, 1844, pp. 939-947. A full account is given in this book of Gassner's treatment, and Ennemoser states that there exists a great number of writings concerning him and his healing from the *pro* and *con* points of view.

and titular Bishop of Sardica. 'The imposing names and titles of this aristocratic personage probably had much to do with his influence,' writes Dr. Tuke in his great work, *The Influence of the Mind upon the Body*.

Prince Hohenlohe was born in Waldenburg in the year 1794, received a good university education, and entered the priesthood in 1815. Five years later he met a simple peasant who had performed some astonishing cures, was convinced by this man's demonstrations of the curative efficacy of prayer, and from him caught the enthusiasm for healing the sick which he subsequently manifested. In 1821 Prince Hohenlohe brought this peasant to the Princess of Swartzenburg, who had been a paralytic invalid for many years despite all that medical skill and knowledge could do for her. Having removed the mechanical apparatus which she wore to overcome the contracture of her affected limbs, she was enjoined to pray with her spiritual physicians, and when called upon to rise and walk, she found she was able to do so, the paralysis (which was in all probability that form known in medical parlance

as 'ideal paralysis') yielding to the influences of a powerful expectant attention and emotional excitement. The next day she went to church, and her recovery proved to be a permanent one.

This short notice of Prince Hohenlohe may be concluded with an account of some of his cures written by two eye-witnesses—one, the ex-King of Bavaria, who was himself the subject of one of these cures, and the other a Professor:—

'My dear Count,[1]—There are still miracles. The ten last days of the last month, the people of Würzburg might believe themselves in the times of the Apostles. The deaf heard, the blind saw, the lame freely walked, not by the aid of art, but by a few short prayers, and by the invocation of the name of Jesus. . . . On the evening of the 28th, the number of persons cured, of both sexes, and of every age, amounted to more than twenty. These were of all classes of the people, from the humblest to a prince of the blood, who, without any exterior means,

[1] Count von Sinsheim.

recovered, on the 27th at noon, the hearing which he had lost from his infancy. This cure was effected by a prayer made for him during some minutes, by a priest who is scarcely more than twenty-seven years of age—the Prince Hohenlohe. Although I do not hear as well as the majority of the persons who are about me, there is no comparison between my actual state and that which it was previously. Besides, I perceive daily that I hear more clearly. . . . My hearing at present is very sensitive. Last Friday the music of the troop which defiled in the square in front of the Palace struck my tympanum so strongly, that for the first time I was obliged to close the window. The inhabitants of Würzburg have testified, by the most lively and sincere acclamations, the pleasure which my cure has given them. You are at liberty to communicate my letter, and to allow any one who wishes to take a copy thereof. LOUIS, PRINCE ROYAL.

'BRÜCKENAU, *July* 3, 1822.'

The second testifier to the Prince's cures is a Professor Onymus of the University of

Würzburg. These cases are mentioned with brief detail in Dr. H. Tuke's work,[1] from which I quote. The first was that of a man of seventy, who, having suffered for many years from paralysis, which had confined him to his room, was cured in a few days.

The second case was that of a man of fifty with 'arms and legs utterly paralysed and face of a corpse-like pallor. On the prayer of the Prince he was instantly cured, rose to his feet, and walked perfectly.'

The third was that of a student who 'had lost for two years the use of his legs'; he too was perfectly cured.

'These cures,' wrote the Würzburg professor, 'are real, and they are permanent. If any one should have doubts of the genuineness of the cases operated by Prince Hohenlohe, it is only necessary to come here and consult a thousand other eye and ear witnesses like myself. Every one is ready to give all possible information about them.'

Of this class of healer, a fairly large one, only three more instances shall be cited, all

[1] *Op. cit.*, pp. 376, 377.

Protestants, and, in their several systems, viz. prayer and the imposition of hands—practically exorcism,—not unlike each other.

Pastor Blumhardt, of Bad Boll in Würtemberg, began his curative ministrations in the year 1841 on an hysterical woman supposed to be possessed by evil spirits. This patient, for whom the local medical skill had proved all unavailing, was for a time cured, though to the end of her life she continued to suffer a good deal from hysterical maladies. The report of this success brought numbers of hopeless sufferers to Bad Boll, and many of them, if not actually restored to health, left the cure establishment greatly benefited. A young man Jew, Theodore Broderser, who came there as an incurable cripple, became healthy on taking part in Blumhardt's operations, and, by the Pastor's directions, he married the hysterical woman, Gottliebinn, who had been the first patient that revealed to him his balsamic gifts. This healer is reported to have cured consumption, eye diseases, knee injuries, hump backs, and even madness. His procedure was fasting, prayer, and the

imposition of hands ; he however laid no special stress on this last, and afterwards seems to have given it up.

Dorothea Trüdel, of Männedorf, near Zürich, was a faith-healer of even greater renown than the pastor. Again, those who had been practically given over by the physicians came to her as a last resource, and were in numbers of instances made whole by their faith. This devout woman instituted an establishment in her native village for her work of mercy ; here prayer, exorcism, anointing with oil, and laying on of hands were the means employed ; the use of 'materia medica' was forbidden.[1]

After Dorothea Trüdel's death in 1862 the work was carried on by Professor Zeller, brother-in-law to the Bishop of Jerusalem, and I believe it still continues. Dr. Schofield, who visited the institution in 1889 and interviewed the Professor, reports thus on the Männedorf cures—

[1] It was found necessary to revive the old quack medicine laws in Germany about thirty years ago, after which it was illegal to forbid proper medical treatment.

'All sorts of nervous diseases and hysterias, and aches and pains of every description, are cured in abundance, and, in addition, Herr Zeller mentioned that consumption, pneumonia, gout, and asthma had all been cured. He spoke of a gentleman who had been cured of cancer on the lip. He told of opium-eaters cured, of bone diseases, of eczema and other skin diseases, and of certain tumours. He himself was cured of eczema by Dorothea Trüdel, and this led to his taking up the work. He had found many mental cases relieved, but no cures of idiots.'[1] The Professor could instance no recoveries from blindness, deafness, dumbness, nor of the swollen neck called goître, so common a complaint in Switzerland.

A very famous Swedish faith-healer is my next and last instance of this class. This is Frederick August Boltzius, born Karlstadt in 1836. Left penniless at an early age by a father who died of drink, his youth was not a happy one. Several times he attempted suicide, but surviving his efforts and awaking

[1] See Dr. Schofield's book already referred to, pp. 20-28.

to a sense of his sins and of the Divine grace, he resolved to devote himself to the welfare and salvation of his fellow-creatures. For some twenty years Boltzius wandered about the country as itinerant merchant, healing the devout sick by prayer, anointment, and the laying on of hands.

In 1884 he made some remarkable cures on patients of wealth and position, and these, persuaded of his heavenly mission, established him in his native town, and supported him so as to enable him to give himself up entirely to his curative ministrations. His fame spread, and from all the northern countries, and even from America, multitudes came to his establishment at Karlstadt to be healed; the numbers of those who visited him often amounting to two hundred daily.

A medical man, E. Thorelius, set himself the task of investigating Boltzius's work and its results, and for a considerable time he lived in the cure establishment examining the sick before and after treatment, and generally watching and studying the working of the system. His conclusions he published in a pamphlet

entitled, *Boltzianismen, ett Skandinavisk Kulturbild*, in 1888, and herein he states that he found that a fairly large percentage of cases were successfully dealt with, but that these were only such in which the ailment was due to nervous disorder, and which, consequently, were amenable to psychic influence, viz. 'suggestion.' The patients he describes as coming to Boltzius in a highly strung state of expectation; it was for most of them a last frantic throw for health, or perhaps even life; their hopes were inspired by the sight of crutches and bandages, the trophies of past successes, which adorned the walls of the waiting-room, and they were further aroused to a state of enthusiasm or ecstasy by the healer's sensational exhortations, the singing of hymns and other such-like emotional upstirring. Nor were their optimistic anticipations damped by hearing of the failures, for it was a strict rule that such were never to be mentioned in the establishment.

A Danish author, Dr. Alfred Lehmann, thus describes Boltzius's procedure: 'He anoints the sick with oil, storming heaven

meanwhile with his supplications, and occasionally blowing on the patient to drive out the evil spirits who hold possession.'[1] His theory was that all illnesses have their root in sinful original nature, and that the devil is principally to blame. His system was practically one of exorcism.

Boltzius claimed to have restored to the blind and deaf their lost senses, to the maimed their limbs, and to lepers their health. Thorelius examined numbers of such cases, however, and found that organically there was no real improvement in their conditions; but that in many instances the patients were in such a state of happy religious exaltation that they either believed themselves healed, or, if their faith did not actually persuade them of this in the face of hard facts to the contrary, that they were anyhow on the eve of certain recovery.

How far a consistent Christianity should

[1] *Aberglaube und Zauberei*, von Dr. Alfred Lehmann, Direktor des Psychophysischen laboratoriums an der Universität Kopenhagen, 1893. Translated into German by Dr. Petersen, 1898. See p. 489. My information regarding Boltzius is chiefly derived from this work.

hold to the principle of faith-healing I do not wish to discuss, nor what faith-healing virtually resolves itself into—the merely seeking or beseeching of blessings (recoveries from sickness and other) on the strength of the command, 'Ask, and it shall be given'; or is it a form of demonology, the ascribing of human ills to the manifestations of evil powers? Seeing things as yet but through a glass darkly (I might almost say, seeing most things as they are not), we need surely not be troubled at the impossibility of explaining and settling such a really non-essential question, but may content ourselves with the assurance that what are commonly called 'miracles' are neither necessary as proofs of the existence of omnipotence, nor of any real importance concerning our belief in a spiritual life. Religion is not dependent upon the basis or support of such so-called 'supernatural' phenomena. 'By the giving up of miracles we need not fear,' writes the author of an article on this subject, 'as Christians, that the inspiring effect of the Great Example it is possible for us to follow will decay. It is indeed better that we should

strive to imitate the faith and service of Jesus than that we should be content to believe in and admire powers which we could never hope to exercise ourselves. If we have lost by this way of thinking the Christ of Christian legend, and if we give up the being whose birth was heralded by angels, and whose corporeal ascension to the skies was witnessed by a worshipping crowd, if we find no reality in the one who is said to have called the dead from the tomb, it is only to see more clearly and love more intensely the man who witnessed and suffered and conquered in the cause of humanity and truth—the man whose simplicity and sincerity struck conviction into the hearts of bigots, and whose unsophisticated teaching of the Fatherhood of God drew the crowds of weary and worn men and women to his side to drink in thoughts which were the water of life,—whose sweet disposition and loving sympathy and tender voice soothed the very maniacs accustomed only to curses and blows, tempered the raging fever, and lifted up, by the compelling power of faith, the helpless from almost lifeless apathy and despair. And surely this is greater :

to change the current of history by a spiritual and self-sacrificing life is grander than to turn water into wine or to perform many wonders before a thoughtless crowd. To have taught men to love truth and freedom and God more than their Church or party or wealth, is the most divine work on earth.'[1]

To return to 'healers,' I will only mention two notorious instances of the second class: the class of those to whom the name of 'quack' or 'charlatan' is commonly applied.

About fifty years ago an American of the name of Newton, 'Dr. Newton,' as he styled himself, travelled about the country giving exhibitions of his thaumaturgic powers, which he claimed to possess by divine endowment. The credulous crowded round him, and large numbers of invalids (those afflicted with hysterical blindness, paralysis, rheumatism, contractions, and other troubles due to neurotic disorder) recovered in many remarkable instances.

The astonishing results obtained by this

[1] 'Miracles and Doctrine,' Walter Lloyd, *Westminster Review*, October 1889.

empiric not only confounded the sober-minded and educated classes, but puzzled ordinary practitioners, including even one or two men of national reputation.

Newton's disciples became numerous, and 'healing mediums' and physicians who cure by the 'laying on of hands still exist,' writes an American observer, 'increasing rather than diminishing in number.'[1]

My second selection from the legionary class of quacks is 'Dr.' Bryant, a contemporary and rival of the last. This man I have chosen because the verdict passed on him by Newton, and the latter's true and naïve explanation of Bryant's cures, strikes me as well worth quoting from Dr. Buckley's chapter on Faith-Healing.[2]

'In 1865,' writes Dr. Buckley, 'there came to Detroit, Michigan, a pupil of Dr. Newton, Bryant by name, who performed cures as successfully as Newton himself. . . . I visited Dr. Bryant, and saw him operate upon a score

[1] *Faith-Healing, Christian Science, and Kindred Phenomena*, J. M. Buckley, LL.D., 1892, p. 2.

[2] *Ibid.* pp. 33, 34. I give the account somewhat curtailed.

or more of patients.' Meeting Dr. Newton about a year later, Dr. Buckley conversed with him concerning his career, and then mentioned his rival, whom Newton 'instantly denounced as an unmitigated fraud, who had no genuine healing power.'

Knowing that the manipulations of Bryant had been followed by some wonderful results in Detroit, Dr. Buckley asked—

'If Bryant be an unmitigated fraud, how do you account for his cures?'

'Oh!' was the reply, 'they are caused by the faith of the people, and the concentration of their minds upon his operations, with the expectation of being cured. Now,' said he, 'none would go to see Bryant unless they had some faith that he might cure them, and when he begins his operations with great positiveness of manner, and they see the crutches he has, and hear the people testify that they have been cured, it produces a tremendous influence upon them; and then he gets them started in the way of exercising, and they do a good many things they thought they could not do; their appetites and spirits revive, and if toning

them up can possibly reduce the diseased tendency, many of them will get well.'

Said I: 'Doctor, pardon me, is not that a correct account of the manner in which you perform your wonderful works?'

'Oh no,' said he; 'the difference between a genuine healer and a quack like Bryant is as wide as the poles.'

Is not some such ingenious distinction, 'wide as the poles,' drawn by others besides this American charlatan, and a claim to the patent of the only true art of healing a common characteristic of this class of thaumaturgists?

CHAPTER II

'CHRISTIAN SCIENCE'

'While many admit the abstract probability that a falsity has usually a nucleus of reality, few bear this abstract probability in mind when passing judgment on the opinions of others. A belief that is finally proved to be grossly at variance with fact is cast aside with indignation or contempt; and in the heat of antagonism scarcely any one inquires what there was in this belief which commended it to men's minds. Yet there must have been something.'—*First Principles*, HERBERT SPENCER, p. 3.

AND now I propose speaking of an American faith-healing method or cult which has met with an almost unrivalled popularity in the States, where it was first expounded some thirty-five years ago, and which, introduced only recently into this country, is attracting the interest and raising the curiosity of not a few.

This Transatlantic movement, which, in character, is a kind of metaphysical mysticism, is subdivided into numerous branches; but I

shall here only discuss that one which is best known in London, the branch, namely, which acknowledges Mary M. Baker Glover Patterson Eddy as its leader, and which sums up the audacity of its claims by the title of 'Christian Science,' which it has, with a strange disregard of fitness, adopted.

For some time little or practically no public notice was taken of this novel religious phenomenon in England; and indeed this seemed as well, for not only is the tolerant principle of 'live and let live' generally the wisest and best, but also with most things the attention drawn by adverse criticism proves a good advertisement, and opposition not infrequently incites a more determined adherence. With 'Christian Science,' however, the let-be principle has not been easy or right to follow, for one of its fundamental doctrines is the absolute disapproval of all rational methods regarding health. Quite recently some attempts at the so-called metaphysical healing practised by these pseudo-scientists have ended fatally, and much public interest has thereby been excited. The sect has been scathingly criticised and

unmercifully ridiculed by the press, and the large majority of those who pride themselves on their sound common-sense have condemned it as not only beneath contempt but unworthy of any serious consideration. It seems to me, however, that 'Christian Scientists' have a right to be treated with some respect, for I believe that the majority of them are very much in earnest and actuated by the highest motives. Would it not also be better to examine their claims and their principles, find out the where-on their successes in curative demonstration are based, and attempt a dispassionate exposure of their most glaring fallacies and most flagrant instances of misconceived science, instead of pronouncing them fit only for the lunatic asylum, if not deserving of criminal procedure?

Many people hearing of 'Christian Science' first through the seemingly miraculous or divinely wrought cures that are advertised as proofs of its 'principle,' are not unnaturally much attracted by a faith which produces such practical and salutary results. 'By their fruits ye shall know them,' they argue simply,

and are satisfied; but an important point is overlooked, for they neglect to assure themselves whether indeed the fruit they see lying beneath the tree of Mrs. Eddy's cultivation fell from its boughs. Therefore it would surely be well to look into these matters; see what fruit there be; examine its kind or quality, and inquire into the origin and circumstances of Eddyism itself.

Another good reason for exposing the pretensions of this sect is that it often produces an unwholesome and even dangerous state of mind in its victims. The important truths which underlie the relations of mind and body are not elucidated but obscured and discredited by the work of the 'Christian Scientist.' One might well exclaim with Job: 'And who are ye, that darken counsel by words without knowledge?'

The fact is that the exponents of 'Christian Science' have not mastered the first elements of science, philosophy, or medicine. They seem to be vainly groping after some truths, or half-truths (no doubt of the highest importance), which they are incapable of dealing

with either in theory or practice; their writings, moreover, display the most hopeless confusion of thought and terminology as regards the relative and the absolute.

It should, however, be pointed out that startling results often ensue from their practice, both good and bad; for there is no doubt that, owing to the vigorous mental activities invoked, great and far-reaching forces may be called into play often with serious consequences. It is freely admitted also that there are certain comparatively rare cases in which individuals have derived considerable benefit physically as well as mentally from the treatment. Dormant spiritual faculties are sometimes awakened into activity in such a way as to transform both character and health. In many such cases, however, even better results would no doubt have been produced by a similar process directed by a more rational and thorough system, free from the vagaries of 'Christian Science.' An abnormal state of egotism and self-righteousness tending to undermine the ordinary powers of discrimination and judgment is often developed by the methods of

this cult, and this frequently mars what good it may otherwise have done. The mischief also that may arise out of the neglect of medicinal procedure, not approved of by these fanatics, should not be overlooked either, as it may prove a real danger to patients in serious cases.

A few words will suffice to describe the introduction of 'Christian Science' into this country. Of its origin in America I propose speaking at length later on, but it may be briefly mentioned that it was in the year 1866, according to the 'founder's' own statement on page 1 of her text-book, *Science and Health, with Key to the Scriptures*,[1] that she 'discovered' the science of 'Metaphysical Healing,' and named it 'Christian Science.'

It was nearly eight years ago that the articles of Mrs. Eddy's creed were first preached in London by a lady who came over from New York for that purpose.

Miss Dodge, for such was the name of this second Augustine, did not, however, stay long

[1] This spiritual *tour de force* is in its 155th edition, each edition consisting of one thousand copies.

with us, but returned over-seas and was replaced in the new mission by first one and then another lady, who each took up and carried on with devoted energy and enthusiasm the work of 'healing' and 'teaching.'

Up to 1896 the meetings of the infant society were held in private drawing-rooms, but in the January of this year, Mrs. Ward, then head of the English branch, made arrangements for the holding of the Sunday 'services' in the Portman Rooms. Soon after this move, namely in April 1896, Mrs. Eddy sent over her first official 'pastor' in the person of Mrs. Field-King, who had done active 'Science' work in St. Louis, Missouri. Within a short time of the new pastor's advent the Portman Rooms were found too small for the increasing attendance, and, her flock desiring a permanent and particular place for their meetings and classes, an old Jewish Synagogue in Bryanston Street, W., was secured by them and refitted for these purposes.

On Sunday the 7th of November 1897, the opening 'service' was held, conducted by Mrs. Field-King, and assisted by the late Sir Douglas

Galton, F.R.S., etc., who, in an address delivered to a congregation of perhaps three hundred persons, gave an account of the rise and progress of the work in England, and ended by calling upon his hearers to rejoice and praise God 'that here, in the heart of great, sin-burdened London, is established, in a fitting temple, the Christ-Truth that has come to fulfil the whole law' (*sic*).

Having thus briefly sketched the sowing in our soil of the professedly divine seed, the plant itself may now be examined, as also the somewhat presumptuous claims made on its behalf. At the outset I must challenge the right of this mystical sect to the very name it has with such lack of modesty adopted; but although its claim to either part of the twofold title of 'Christian Science' is absolutely untenable, it will for convenience sake thus be referred to in the following pages.

To go to the heart of the matter, three leading questions shall be put to the 'Christian Scientist.' Under the heading of each of these three I shall ask a series of others, referring to the text-book for replies and information,

wherever this supreme authority happens to deal with the points in question.

(1) What does the 'Christian Scientist's' belief consist in?

(2) Whereon is this belief founded?

(3) What evidence can the 'Christian Scientist' produce in support of her belief?

The last of these questions being the one most simple to deal with, I will take it first.

The 'Scientist's' reply to it will be, 'Well, there are the tangible proofs which bare witness to our faith, namely, the cases of healing which demonstrate the truth of the "Divine Principle" of "Christian Science." "By their fruits ye shall know them." The fruits of our Science can be reckoned by the hundred thousand! is not this proof sufficient?'

Referring to the discovery of this 'Principle' that 'Mind' governs all, Mrs. Eddy writes: 'It has proved itself, whenever scientifically employed, to be the most effective curative agent in medical practice.'

(Medicine, by the way, she has just denounced above as 'not a science, but a bundle of specu-

lative human theories.' One must infer from this dictum that the author of *Science and Health* has a definition of her own, somewhat different from the vulgarly accepted one of the term as—rationalised knowledge of observed facts.)

In support of this proof-assertion, the 'Christian Scientist' will point triumphantly to thousands of cases of apparently miraculous cures effected by the 'Principle' of her 'Science.' Thus to a large extent the foundations of Mrs. Eddy's religion rest on what is technically called 'thaumaturgy,' the art of working wonders or miracles.

Now as to these cures, which are reckoned in such countless numbers in America, I would ask a few questions; but, before doing so, I grant unhesitatingly the probability of a very large proportion of them being genuine and well authenticated. The cause of these results must be put aside now for discussion later on.

On this subject of the healing proofs of 'Christian Science' there are five questions to be considered—

First, What ills or diseases have been successfully treated by 'Christian Science'?

Second, Have a fair percentage of its successful cases been authenticated by a previous medical diagnosis?

The 'Christian Science' Journals[1] teem with instances of this so-called 'metaphysical' healing; but, to an impartial inquirer, these accounts read like the rapturous and highly-coloured statements of fervent enthusiasts—individuals (women mainly) of whom we may say we know nothing but their signed names or initials.

Thirdly, Have the 'Christian Scientists' kept any record of their unsuccessful cases and of instances of relapse?

By unsuccessful cases I mean not only cases in which their 'treatment' has failed to cure, but in which in consequence of their having undertaken a patient in a serious condition, the latter has succumbed to the disease, all medical aid or precautionary measures having been thrown over at the fiat of the 'healer.'

When confronted with this or that indivi-

[1] Published monthly in Boston, Mass., U.S.A.

dual failure, heard of accidentally, I am aware that the explanation naïvely put forward by the 'Scientist' is *the absence of sufficient faith and understanding in the patient.* This is a simple but hardly satisfactory answer. It is merely begging the question.

Fourth, In what do the results of 'Christian Science' healing differ from those obtained by other methods? Other cults and religious systems, such as the 'Salvation Army faith-healers,' the 'New Forest Shakers,' the 'Mormons,' the 'Peculiar People,' etc. (all only differing from each other, and from Lourdes, in their several systems of doctrinal teaching), have obtained the same therapeutic results.

Fifth, How is it that the power or capacity of 'Christian Science' 'healing' stops short at surgical cases?

I find Mrs. Eddy states: 'One disease is no more real than another.' (May one read for 'disease' physical evil?) Again: 'Christian Science heals organic diseases as well as functional.' And again: 'The evidence of Divine Mind's healing power and absolute control is to me as certain as the

evidence of my existence'[1] (p. 69, *Science and Health*). I may also add dentistry to the surgical limits, as even the most experienced 'Science practitioners' have to avail themselves of this branch of a despised and condemned art when their teeth want repairing, or, being beyond possibility of repair, require abstraction.[2]

It is a noticeable fact that this limit in cases of *bonâ fide* surgical need is common to all 'faith healing' systems, and it demonstrates the plain fact that all of them attain their results in accordance with and through the

[1] Referring to p. 400 of *Science and Health*, I find the following statement and explanation: 'Christian Science is always the most skilful surgeon, but surgery is the branch of its healing that will be last demonstrated.'

[2] Extract from an article on 'Christian Science' in the *Interior* of April 11, 1896: 'A prominent Boston dentist was called from his bed at two o'clock one morning to go to the relief of a lady who was suffering the agonies of toothache. He went, relieved her pain, and went again during the day to do something more to the teeth. He had not taken much notice of the name given him at his first visit, but on reaching the house the second time, his eye fell on the door-plate, and he found that he had been called in such hot haste to relieve the pain of one who makes a handsome income by teaching that there is no such thing as pain. His patient was a shining light of "Christian Science," but she could not cure her toothache.'

same physiological laws.[1] From the faith-healer's own point of view, however, it must surely be inexplicable that the Omnipotent should thus limit the human agent's powers of negativing with practical results the 'mistaken mortal belief' in physical defect in this one or other direction. Why, one may fairly ask, should 'treatment' be able to make itself manifest and overcome every conceivable disease, and yet require medical 'first aid' to set the broken bones of a leg? I know, in writing this, that instances of structural healing are claimed as having been effected by 'Christian Science' treatment, but I can only say that I have not been fortunate enough to hear of a single case *certified by any trustworthy evidence.*

And now we may return to our fundamental questions, and deal with the first, which refers to the articles of the 'Christian Science' belief.

What are these?

[1] 'Between religious and lay faith-cures no distinction can be made: the same working of the brain produces in each case the same effect.'—J. M. Charcot, 'The Faith Cure,' *New Review*, Jan. 1893.

This query cannot probably be answered in a more simple or direct way than by quoting *verbatim* from the text-book.

'CHAPTER XIV

'RECAPITULATION

. . . . . .

'*Question.*—Have Christian Scientists any religious creed?

'*Answer.*—They have not, if we accept the term as doctrinal beliefs. The following is a brief exposition of the important points, or religious tenets, of Christian Science:—

'1. As adherents of Truth, we take the Scriptures for our guide to eternal Life.

'2. We acknowledge and adore one Supreme God. We acknowledge His Son, and the Holy Ghost, and man as the Divine image and likeness.

'3. We acknowledge God's forgiveness of sin, in the destruction of sin, and that sin and suffering are not eternal.

'4. We acknowledge the atonement as the efficacy and evidence of Divine Love, of man's unity with God, and the great merits of the Way-shower.

'5. We acknowledge the way of Salvation demonstrated by Jesus to be the power of Truth over all error, sin, sickness, and death; and the resurrection of human faith and understanding to seize the great possibilities and living energies of Divine Life.

'6. We solemnly promise to strive, watch, and pray for that Mind to be in us which was also in Christ Jesus, to love one another, and to be meek, merciful, just, and *pure*' (*Science and Health*, pp. 492, 493).

I will now quote, for further information as to the 'Christian Science' tenets, from the beginning of this same chapter, which is mainly a condensation of the whole book.

'QUESTION AND ANSWER.

'*Q.* What is God?

'*A.* God is divine Principle, supreme incorporeal Being, Mind, Spirit, Soul, Life, Truth, Love.

'*Q.* Are these terms synonymous?

'*A.* They are. They refer to one absolute God, and nothing else. They are also in-

tended to express the nature, essence, and wholeness of Deity. . . .' (p. 461).

'*Q.* What is man?

'*A.* Man is not matter, made up of brains, blood, bones, and other material elements. The Scriptures inform us that man was made in the image and likeness of God. Matter is not that likeness. The reflection of Spirit cannot be so unlike Spirit. Man is spiritual and perfect. . . . Man is the idea of divine Principle, not physique. He is the compound idea of God, including all right ideas. . . . Man is incapable of sin, sickness, and death, inasmuch as he derives his essence from God, and possesses not a single original, or underived power. Hence the real man cannot depart from holiness. Nor can God, by whom man was evolved, engender the capacity or freedom to sin. A mortal sinner is not God's man, for the offspring of God cannot be evil. Mortals are man's counterfeits. They are the children of the Wicked One, or the one evil, which declares that man begins as a material embryo' (pp. 471-2).

Mortals, then, are evidently men and women

as we see them. They are counterfeits of the real, divine man, who is somewhere enshrouded in the human being, and which it is the prerogative of 'Christian Science' to bring into evidence. But how did the counterfeit come into existence? Mrs. Eddy tells us that it is the child of the Wicked One. It will not avail her to immediately obscure her statement by defining the Wicked One to be 'the one evil,' for 'Wicked One' and 'one evil' are by no stretch of imagination the same thing, the one is an Agent, who begat the 'Mortal,' and the other is a quality; and a quality can do nothing. But we are not left to surmise what she means, for we are plainly told on page 472, that[1]—

'Mortals are not fallen children of God. They never had a perfect state of Being, which may be subsequently regained. They were, from the beginning of mortal history, conceived in sin and brought forth in iniquity.'

That is, by the Wicked One.

[1] This criticism is derived from *An Examination of Christian Science*, by H. Martyn Hart, D.D., published in New York (1897), which seemed to me clearly put and worth quoting.

Mrs. Eddy's object is to prove that 'mortal man' is no reality but a phantom, an illusion conjured up by error. Here, therefore, the 'Wicked One' is a convenient agent, with something of the phantom character of 'mortal man,' as it is frequently asserted in *Science and Health* that error is an illusion, an unreality.

We may now examine into the 'Scientist's' tenets regarding *matter*. The glossary with which Mrs. Eddy's book is furnished has the following definition:—

'Matter, Mythology, Mortality; another name for mortal mind; illusion; intelligence, substance and life in non-intelligence and mortality; life resulting in death, and death in life; sensation in the sensationless; mind originating in matter; the opposite of Truth; the opposite of Spirit; the opposite of God; that of which immortal mind takes no cognisance; that which mortal mind sees, feels, hears, tastes, and smells only in belief' (p. 582).

Or again:—

'The real Life, or Mind, and its opposite—

the so-called material life—are figured by two geometrical symbols, a circle, or sphere, and a straight line.'

Mrs. Eddy has two minds: 'Mind,' divine and existent, and 'mind,' mortal and non-existent. She plays with these, and throws them about as does the conjurer his balls, and in the same way confuses one with her sleight-of-hand or wit.

Criticism of her arguments, therefore, is practically futile, but, it must be asked, if mind and matter are as distinct as her 'Science' teaches, how can the one act on the other? Mrs. Eddy has, alas! no Logos to bridge over the gulf which she has made.

Then we are told that, 'Will power is capable of all evil,' and, 'Human will is an animal propensity, not a faculty of Soul. Hence it cannot govern man aright.'[1] And we are referred to Truth and Love 'as the motive-powers of man.' But how is man to choose Truth and Love and take them as his motive-powers without the exercise of will?

Then as to life—what has been revealed to

[1] P. 486.

Mrs. Eddy on this not unimportant subject?

Referring again to Chapter XIV., 'Recapitulation,' I find the following definition:—

'Life is divine Principle, Mind, Soul, Spirit, without beginning and without end. Eternity, not time, expresses the thought of life, and time is no part of eternity. One ceases when the other is recognised. One is finite; the other is for ever infinite. Life is neither in nor of matter. What is termed matter is unknown to Spirit, which involves in itself all Substance, and is Life Eternal. Matter is a human concept. Life is divine Mind. Life is not limited. . . .'

This part of the inquiry may be concluded with what these somewhat original followers of Christ know as the 'Scientific statement of Being.' This 'statement' is repeated by them at their services, and is as follows:—

'There is no life, truth, intelligence, or substance in matter. All is infinite Mind and its infinite manifestation, for God is All in all. Spirit is immortal Truth; matter is mortal error. Spirit is the real and eternal; matter is

the unreal and temporal. Spirit is God, and man is His image and likeness; hence, man is spiritual and not material' (*S. and H.* p. 464).

And finally, we come to the second of the prefatory questions which concerns the foundation of this novel creed, after which I hope to have somewhat cleared the ground for a consideration of the extent to which Mrs. Eddy and her co-religionists can substantiate their claim to call their system first 'Christian,' and secondly a 'Science.'

On what then is 'Christian Science' founded?

On the Scriptures, as illumined to Mary Baker Eddy, whom 'God had been graciously fitting during many years, for a reception of a final revelation of the absolute principle of Scientific Mind-healing' (*Science and Health*, p. 1).

The divinely inspired medium of this revelation amplifies the above statement further on by the following—

'The Bible has been my only text-book. I have had no other guide in "the straight and narrow way" of this Science' (p. 20).

'I have found nothing in ancient or in

modern systems on which to found my own, except the teachings and demonstrations of our great Master, and the lives of the prophets and apostles' (p. 20).

'I plant myself unreservedly on the teachings of Jesus, of his apostles, of the prophets, and on the testimony of the Science of Mind' (p. 165).

The fact is that the modest 'Discoverer' and 'Founder' of the 'final revelation' has based a part of her incongruous fabric on detached texts of 'holy writ,' to which texts she has arbitrarily assigned interpretations of her own, and such as would suit her scheme of the universe.

To consider this scheme in its aspects with regard to Christianity (not the Christianity of any one or other particular 'Church,' but the broad basis of Christianity which underlies all forms of Christian dogma) is, however, no easy matter; for, after wading through the confused and pretentious verbiage of Mrs. Eddy's *Summa*,[1] a 'chaos of thought,' a tangled wilderness of philosophical jargon, one's under-

[1] *Science and Health* is a formidable volume of 569 pages, with 20 extra pages of glossary-appendix.

standing is bewildered—nay, almost paralysed —by what an American writer, commenting on the work, describes as 'the endless phantasmagoria of contradictions which defies any explanation accordant with common sense.'[1] One feels, indeed, almost at a loss on what point to tackle this subject—what limb of this mystical octopus to lay hands on, and again I am compelled to resort to cross-examination, deriving the answers as before from the *soi-disant* fountain-head of revealed Truth.

Thus :—Does Mrs. Eddy follow Christ in propounding the non-existence of matter? From what text or texts does she succeed in interpreting this professed truth, which is the corner-stone of her spiritual fabric?

Referring to *Science and Health*, I find numerous statements dealing more or less vaguely with Christ as regards this problem of matter, and from them select the following passages, from a number which equally fail to convince me that Christ's meaning is rightly interpreted by Mrs. Eddy.

[1] *The Claims of Christian Science as so styled, etc.*, F. S. Jewell, S.T.D., Milwaukee, Wisconsin, 1892.

'Jesus plunged beneath the material surface of things, and found their spiritual cause. *To accommodate himself* to immature ideas of spiritual power—for spirituality was possessed only in a limited degree, even by his disciples—Jesus called the body, which by this power he raised from the grave, "flesh and bones"' (p. 209).

'Our Master declared that his material body was not spirit, *evidently considering it a mortal and material belief* of flesh and bones' (p. 297).

What authority has Mrs. Eddy for the interpretation of the words in italics? (They are not in italics in her text.)

'Wearing in part a human form (that is, as it seemed to mortal view) . . . Jesus was the mediator between Spirit and the flesh, between Truth and error. . . . Christ was manifested through Jesus to prove the power of Spirit over the flesh—to show that Truth is made manifest upon the human mind and body, healing sickness and sin' (p. 211).

How could Jesus deny the existence of matter and yet mediate between Spirit and flesh, and 'show that Truth is made manifest upon the human mind and body,' etc.?

'The invisible Christ was incorporeal, whereas *Jesus was a corporeal or bodily existence. This dual personality*, of the unseen and the seen, the spiritual and material, *the Christ and Jesus, continued until the Master's ascension*' (p. 229).

This last line[1] again instances a strange misunderstanding or misreading of the New Testament. See Acts, chapter i., verses 10, 11, for the account of Christ's ascension :—

'And while they (the Apostles) were looking steadfastly into heaven as he went, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye looking into heaven? This *Jesus*, which was received up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye beheld him going into heaven.'

The above quotations, though perplexingly contradictory and evasive, surely attribute something like a reality to matter and its manifestations, and nowhere in the text-book itself can I find Mrs. Eddy's authority referred to for stating that Christ *denied* matter, nor

[1] The italics are again the author's, not Mrs. Eddy's.

have I sought for it with greater success in the New Testament.

What then is the origin of this negative quantity according to Mrs. Eddy, and how evolved?

Here it is, clearly stated: 'Matter is an error in belief' (p. 173). 'A manifestation of mortal mind' (p. 545). It is the manifestation of 'the myriad forms of mortal thought' (p. 202). Or again, it is 'but the subjective state' of mortal mind (p. 8).

Thus I have distinctly traced matter to the powerful entity which Mrs. Eddy names 'mortal mind,' and my task will therefore be to examine the somewhat mysterious character of this new factor which creates a negative. But again I find myself, alas! sinking into a quagmire of contradictions, inconsistencies, and wild postulates. Again the inspired authoress of the *Key to the Scriptures* gets herself involved, in her heroic attempt to interpret the philosophical problems of existence, and to enlighten its unfathomable depths, in a maze of absurd and illogical deductions, disdaining even in her method the ordinary procedure of scientific

workers. Instead of propounding her views in some systematic order, working up her points with some show of logic, 'line upon line,' from a well defined base, she appears to rely chiefly on the dazing results produced on many intellects of no mean quality by the continual reiteration of positive and dogmatic assertions, and her *magnum opus* is but a striking proof of the general truth of the dictum that logic is not the strong point of the sex to which she belongs.

My task now therefore is to try and sift out the 'mortal mind' tenet from the 590 pages of 'metaphysical' teaching before me, a task which, as I have just explained, is no easy one.

Turning to page 8 of the text-book, I find the author 'calls sick and sinful humanity *mortal mind*—meaning by this term the flesh opposed to Spirit—human error and evil in contradistinction to Truth and Good.'

As the phrase *mortal mind* 'is used in teaching "Christian Science," it is meant to designate *something which has no real existence*.'

So here we again find ourselves in the *cul de sac* of negation. A negation has created

another negation! On the next page, however, I come upon the 'Scientific definition of Mortal Mind,' which will no doubt clear the matter—

'Scientific Definition of Mortal Mind.

'*First Degree:* Depravity.

'Physical: Passions and appetites, fear, depraved will, pride, envy, deceit, hatred, revenge, sin, disease, death. (Unreality.)

'*Second Degree:* Evil Disappearing.

'Moral: Honesty, affection, compassion, hope, faith, meekness, temperance. (Transitional qualities.)

'*Third Degree:* Spiritual salvation.

'Spiritual: Faith, wisdom, power, purity, understanding, health, love. (Reality.)'

(P. 9.)

But although thus 'scientifically' expounded, I still fail to solve the problem, and must therefore leave it to those of greater scientific knowledge. This point cannot, however, be altogether laid aside, for it appears that this 'Human mind produces what is termed

organic disease as certainly as it produces hysteria.' It is by now no surprise to find that 'what is termed disease does not exist' (p. 81). And that 'the belief of sin . . . is an unconscious error in the beginning—an embryotic thought without motive' (p. 81). Or that 'colds, coughs, and contagion are engendered solely by mortal belief' (p. 116). This last assertion is conclusively proved by the fact that 'the snowbird sings and soars amid the blasts; he has no catarrh from wet feet. . . . The atmosphere of the earth, kinder than the atmosphere of mortal mind, leaves catarrh to the latter' (p. 116).

Whence, then, has Mrs. Eddy derived this mystical conception of the non-existence of matter, sin, sickness, and pain? That matter is non-existent is a late Vedanta doctrine, but *where* is it propounded by the Christ, on whose teachings she assumes to 'plant' herself 'unreservedly'? If the Redeemer denied these relative realities, what mission did He come to fulfil in carnate form on earth?

And finally, it must be asked, where is the distinction taught in 'Scripture' between the

'man Jesus' and Christ the 'ideal in the bosom of the Principle'? (p. 334).

If, however, I continue a critical examination of this newly revealed Christianity, I shall overtax the reader's patience. I will therefore close this portion by giving Mrs. Eddy's 'Spiritualised' paraphrase, or rather parody, of that prayer, so unique in its beauty of simplicity and directness, which Christ gave out to the multitude on the Galilean mountain :—

'Our Father and Mother God, all-harmonious,
Adorable One.
Thy kingdom is come,
Good is ever-present and omnipotent.
Enable us to know—as in Heaven, so in earth—
God is all in all.
Give us grace for to-day; feed Thou the famished affections;
And Divine Love is reflected in love;
And leaveth us not in temptation, but delivereth us from evil,—sin, disease, and death.
For God is omnipresent Good, Substance, Life, Truth, Love.'

(*Science and Health*, p. 322.)

Is it not inconceivable that thousands of educated persons can accept teaching of this type; that their common-sense does not revolt,

or their sense of humour at least prevent their favouring a gospel which abounds with bombastic paragraphs similar to those quoted and the following, culled at random from the pages of *Science and Health*. How can such an argument as this one, for instance, be taken seriously, and not looked upon with suspicion as a test for the enthusiast's credulity?

To prove the supremacy of mind over matter, Mrs. Eddy writes—

'Because the muscles of the blacksmith's arm are strongly developed, it does not follow that exercise has produced this result, or that a less used arm must be weak. If matter were the cause of action, and muscles, without co-operation of mortal mind, could lift the hammer and strike the nail, it might be thought true that hammering would enlarge the muscles. The trip-hammer is not increased in size by exercise. Why not, since muscles are as material as wood and iron? Because mortal mind is not willing that result on the hammer' (p. 94).

Here is another imposing argument—

'Inversions: The metaphysics of Christian

Science, like the rules of mathematics, prove the rule by inversion. For example, there is no pain in Truth, and no truth in pain; no nerve in Mind, and no mind in nerve; no matter in Mind, and no mind in matter; no matter in Life, and no life in matter; no matter in Good, and no good in matter' (p. 7).

Discussing Genesis and the problem of Being, Mrs. Eddy writes—

'Ontology receives less attention than physiology. Why? Because mortal mind must waken to spiritual Life before it cares to solve the problem of Being; but when that awakening comes, existence will be viewed from a new standpoint.

'It is related that a father, anxious to try such an experiment, plunged his infant babe, only a few hours old, into water for several minutes, and repeated this operation daily, until the child could remain under water twenty minutes moving and playing without harm, like a fish. Parents should remember this, and so learn how to develop their children properly on dry land' (p. 549).

Surely this watery experiment is rather a

dangerous suggestion, for there are doubtless some parents among Mrs. Eddy's loyal thousands who might think themselves justified by the above receipt in attempting development of their 'babes' in the water as well as on dry land.

That the doctrines set forth in Mrs. Eddy's *Key to the Scriptures* must be accepted *in toto*, the following paragraph proves :—

'If mathematics present a thousand different examples of one principle, the proving of one example authenticates all the others. A simple statement of Christian Science, if demonstrated by healing, contains the proof of all here said of it. *If one of the statements in this book is true, every one must be true, for not one departs from its system and rule*'[1] (p. 539).

Having thus discussed at sufficient length the tenets of this strange sect, the reader may care to hear something of the origin of the movement—the details of which origin are by no means of insignificant import.

Preliminarily, however, I would refer very briefly to the circumstances which gave rise

[1] The italics are the author's.

to 'Christian Science,' and to which are due, in great measure, the phenomenal success this *soi-disant* revelation has had in America, where its adherents number over a million souls.[1]

It is generally recognised that the movement of public opinion is very like a pendulum, a swing to one extreme being generally followed by an oscillation in the other direction.

In the middle of this century materialism may be said to have held the field; science in all its many branches was vigorously active, and the study of material phenomena and the application of knowledge led to mechanical theories of the universe and the growth of materialistic ideas. The tendency was consequently to ascribe moral and mental states too entirely and uniformly to physical conditions, the influence of the body on the mind being so clearly recognised that the counterpart workings of our dual organisation was not held of sufficient account. Occasional reactions against this materialistic tendency or one-sidedness have, however, taken place, and most

[1] 'Christian Scientists' of all 'schools,' not Mrs. Eddy's only.

notably so on the western side of the Atlantic. In parts of America novelty in almost any form is eagerly sought after, however contradictory to acknowledged facts and common sense. Modern spiritualism, it will be remembered, originated in the pioneer land of scientific progress: Swedenborgianism flourished there, and so have innumerable other extravagant revelations. To mention two well-known such—Thomas Lake Harris, prophet, seer, and trance-writer of Salem-on-Erie, an Englishman by birth, and Helena Petrovna Blavatsky, high-priestess of theosophy—both found the New World sympathetic and receptive to their 'counsels of perfection.' A recent newspaper article describes Boston, the most cultivated city in the United States, as having 'whole streets given over to "mediums" who make a good living by professing to cure diseases and to foretell the future.'[1]

One is sometimes almost inclined to believe that nothing can be too extravagant for acceptance by certain sections in the New World; by a people of a far more nervous and excite-

[1] See *Spectator*, October 1, 1898.

able temperament than we, who are not only more open to new ideas (to which quality their progress is in great measure due), but eager, if not actually impatient, for such; whose religious opinions are, moreover, less fixed than are ours on the traditional lines of Old World theology. It has, for instance, been computed that there are in the States one hundred and forty-five varieties of religious belief, and over five hundred societies devoted to the exploration of spiritualism and the propagation of spiritualistic cults.

Of the bulk of these Transatlantic faiths one hears little or nothing, and one fails even to realise their very existence. The fact is that a more than local notoriety and success in proselytism is not usually attainable unless the new creed be preached by some exceptional person. This must be one endowed either with deep spiritual gifts or with the power of organisation, together with an insight into human nature; or else the 'revelation' itself must boast of some materially beneficial or advantageous tenet (such as faith-healing) and have the good fortune to hit sufficient marks

to discount the misses. Mormonism, founded some eighty years ago by a low-class impostor, does not owe the degree of success it has attained to any ethical beauty or spiritual quality in the creed itself, nor again to its founder; but chiefly to the plain fact that it panders to the passions of the multitude, and touches a practical side of life in the organisation of emigration and the settlement of its converts in the Mormon country. Hence the material advantage accruing from membership is, like the benefit of healing, one that is most fully appreciated by those who are least burdened with this world's possessions.

Now, though 'Christian Science' does not deal with the practical problems of life in this very substantial manner, it fulfils other demands and supplies other wants, such as the healing of the body in many functional cases by mental agency (many of which cases have even resisted ordinary medical treatment), the feeding of the passion for novelty and the craving for mysticism. To many also who have found the faith in which they were conventionally brought up a vague and lifeless form, unworkable for every-

day life, or rendered so by habit and convention, 'Christian Science' has, like most pietistic movements, doubtless supplied a spiritual stimulus and proved temporarily a moral incentive and support, for the teaching of some of these new preachers breathes much that is spiritually helpful and inspiring, although, it must be rather ungraciously added, nothing that is original, except indeed the so-called metaphysical tenets respecting material phenomena.

It is, besides, a common human characteristic that the majority of those who choose themselves a creed and a new path of redemption are apt to live up to its lights with far more ardour and conscientious regard to its dictates than they accorded to the discarded faith which they had imbibed with other parts of an inherited system.

Another point which should be borne in mind is the *enormous prevalence of nervous diseases in America*. Its climate is far more rarified than ours, and its people live at a very high pressure: they consequently overdo their nerve-powers and break down with some form or other of mental trouble or hysteria.

Deafness and blindness, for instance, are often not the result of any organic mischief, but are simply due to lapse of nerval force. The organs or muscles may be in perfect order, but if the nerves are severely relaxed or disordered the sense impressions are not conveyed, and deafness or blindness is the result. Stimulate these defective agents and the cure is effected. Under these circumstances it is therefore probable that this new world, so far advanced in most departments of knowledge, will ever be the happy hunting-ground of quacks and faith-healers, for, in this as in most things, demand creates a supply, and with maladies of a nervous nature mental treatment is more efficacious than that by any purely material remedies.

Mrs. Eddy's 'doctrines' are, too, as I have more than hinted, so confusingly and subtly wrapped up in unintelligible phraseology that their absurdities are not so apparent as were Joseph Smith's 'revelations,' and her liberal use of philosophical terms not only imposes on the simple and ignorant, but on numbers also of the superior and educated classes whose con-

fidence is apparently gained to a certain extent thereby, these latter being induced by a regrettable modesty to believe that what *appears* to them ridiculous and inconsistent in the 'Science' teachings is so only in consequence of their own ignorance of metaphysics and presumed lack of spiritual insight. They are, in fact, dazed by Mrs. Eddy's nebulous conceptions of philosophy, and awed into acceptance of a system which they find too deep for their common-sense criticism. They forget, however, in hailing this would-be Messiah, that every age has known many such: seers, prophets, and heaven-sent apostles of new gospels, who, after achieving a nine-day reputation, have been barely remembered by a succeeding generation as cranks or impostors—perhaps most often even forgotten altogether.

'Christian Science' is, like most other such sects, subdivided into many conflicting parties, who regard each other with jealousy and denounce each other's doctrines as 'false teachings.' All 'Christian Scientists' and mental healers of this type, however, hold to the main tenets of the non-existence of sin

and sickness—or inharmony—and they 'treat' these deceptive appearances ('claims,' as they are technically called by them) by realising their negative nature.

Mary Mason Baker Glover Patterson Eddy[1] —'Mother Eddy,' as she is reverently called by her disciples—claims to have been the 'Discoverer' and 'Founder' of this new 'Christianity,' and she is consequently regarded by her followers as not only directly inspired, but as a God-sent teacher second only to One. The following passage from the cult organ will give an idea of the extravagant esteem in which this truly remarkable woman is held:—

'Surely the people of the coming centuries will vie with each other in doing homage to the Rev. Mary Baker Eddy, the greatest character since the advent of Jesus the Christ, and her book, *Science and Health, with Key to the Scriptures*, will go down in history as a part of the sacred writings of the ages.'[2]

The discovery claims of the curative system,

[1] Baker was Mrs. Eddy's maiden name: Glover, Patterson, and Eddy those adopted in matrimony.

[2] See the *Christian Science Journal* for October 1895.

which is the backbone of Mrs. Eddy's 'Science,' are, however, much disputed, and it is more than probable that she was greatly indebted to a mental healer named Phineas Parkhurst Quimby, as well as to the 'miraculous vision' which she tells us she found needful 'to sustain her when taking the first footsteps in this science.'[1]

A few facts will best explain this matter, and not only enable the reader to come to some conclusion thereon, but to form some estimate of this Prophetess, who has certainly not deemed it fit to 'glorify her soul in meekness.'

P. P. Quimby[2] was a healer of a fairly wide reputation in America at the time of which I am writing, and patients came from long distances to be treated by him. He was an uneducated man, but of an ingenious and speculative disposition, and, on becoming interested in mesmerism, he gave up his trade, which was that of a watchmaker, for the profession of mesmeric diagnosis and healing.

[1] See *Rudimental Divine Science*, by Mary B. Eddy, 1897, p. 31.
[2] Born in Lebanon, N. H., Feb. 16, 1802.

From this irregular style of practice the amateur physician eventually evolved his system of mind-cure, and, discharging the medium he had hitherto employed for assistance in the diagnosis of cases, he gave up mesmerism and expounded the following doctrine concerning the nature of disease—

'I deny disease as a truth, but admit it as a deception, started like all other stories without any foundation, and handed down from generation to generation till the people believe it, and it has become a part of their lives.'

According to Mrs. Eddy's own account it was in 1862 that, having suffered for several years from chronic diseases, she left her nurse and sickbed at home for Portland, where Quimby was then living. She must have been induced to make this pilgrimage by the accounts she heard of the healer's wonderful cures. The newspapers at this time were full of accounts and notices of Dr. Quimby—some writing ecstatically of his work, testifying to the successful results obtained by his novel methods, others ridiculing and defaming him as a charlatan.

In less than a week after the commencement of the new treatment, the patient, who had arrived in a state of great physical weakness and mental depression, was recovering rapidly and able to climb the hundred and eighty-two steps of the City Hall Dome. The account I am quoting from is a testimonial article which Mrs. Eddy wrote at the time to the *Portland Evening Courier* in praise of her benefactor.

'To the most subtle reasoning,' she writes, 'such proof, coupled, too, as it is with numberless similar ones, demonstrates his power to heal. Now for a brief analysis of his power.

'Is it Spiritualism?' she asks—but argues that it cannot be so, for Quimby himself denies that his curative faculty is derived from the spirits of this or another world, and 'it were a doubtful proceeding not to believe him for his work's sake.'

'Again, is it by animal magnetism? Let us examine. I have employed electro-magnetism and animal magnetism, and for a brief interval have felt relief from the equilibrium which I fancied was restored to an exhausted

system, or by the diffusion of concentrated action; but in no instance did I get rid of a return of all my ailments, because I had not been helped out of the error in which opinions involved me. My operator believed in disease independent of the mind; hence I could not be wiser than my teacher. But now I can see dimly at first the great principle which underlies Dr. Quimby's faith and works; and just in proportion to my right perception of truth is my recovery. This truth, which he opposes to the error of giving intelligence to matter and placing pain where it never placed itself, if received understandingly, changes the currents of the system to their normal action, and the mechanism of the body goes on undisturbed. . . .

'The truth which he establishes in the patient cures him (although he may be wholly unconscious thereof), and the body which is full of light is no longer in disease.'

A few days later this enthusiastic patient and disciple wrote again to the newspapers in praise and vindication of the new apostle of spiritual healing—

'P. P. Quimby stands upon the plane of wisdom with his truth. Christ healed the sick, but not by juggling or with drugs; as the former speaks as never man before spake, and heals as never man healed since Christ, is he not identified with truth, and is not this the Christ that was in him? We know that in wisdom is life, and the life was the light of man. P. P. Quimby rolls away the stone from the sepulchre of error, and health is the resurrection. . . .'

Lastly, after 'Dr. Quimby's' death in 1865, Mrs. Eddy sent some verses written by herself to a Lynn newspaper. This last tribute to the master was entitled—

'Lines on the death of Dr. P. P. Quimby, who healed with the truth that Christ taught, in contradistinction to all isms.'

The concluding lines of this poetical effusion alone are worth quoting—the rest may be described as vaguely unintelligible—

'Rest should reward him who hath made us whole,
Seeking, though tremblers, where his footsteps trod.'

It is surely rather difficult to reconcile these high tributes with the emphatic assertions in

Science and Health concerning Mrs. Eddy's unaided interpretation of Christianity and understanding of the negative nature of disease.

In her later effusions, after the writer of the above appreciations had blossomed out into a seer of hidden truths and a spiritual guide and healer, she speaks of having been attended by Mr. Quimby, whom she vaguely describes as 'a sensible elderly gentleman, with some advanced views about healing. . . .' 'When he doctored me,' she further states, 'I was ignorant of the nature of mesmerism, but subsequent knowledge has convinced me that he practised it.'

To say the least, Mrs. Eddy's statements are strangely inconsistent, and, if she penned the assertions which claim a humanly unaided inspiration in her text-book in all good faith, her memory must have played her very false, and made her the victim of some decidedly unfavourable suspicions.

'O that Heaven had set a seal upon men, that we might know them, honest from dishonest!' wrote the old tragedian.

Enough has now been said of Quimby, who died in 1865, a year before his fervent admirer 'discovered the system which she denominated Christian Science.' Mrs. Eddy's version of this discovery, and of the circumstances which led her to make it, should now be briefly given.

Having been condemned by her physicians to die within a few hours from a fatal injury caused by an accident, she was suddenly inspired with a conviction that she would recover and be well by the time medically decreed for her death. The inspiration proved itself true, and it was this manifestation of what she regarded as the direct and gracious exercise of the Divine power which proved the starting-point of her metaphysical speculations and discoveries. One may, however, surmise without undue scepticism that hysteria was accountable for much, and that the lady was of a neurotic temperament and of a highly imaginative nature.

Hypnotism under many different names (*e.g.* 'mesmerism,' 'Braidism,' 'electro-biology,' 'animal magnetism,' etc.) and spiritualism were much in vogue in America at the time that Mrs. Eddy tells us she was meditating over the

cause of her recovery and the spiritual laws of man's moral and physical being.[1] Endowed with a fertile imagination (but, alas! no sense of humour!), a woman's blind enthusiasm, and a richly developed self-confidence, she built up by degrees her so-called 'metaphysical system' or 'Divine Science,' being, so it is reputed, aided in her labours by a student of German idealistic philosophy, to whom no doubt is due the credit of having flavoured it with smatterings from the works of Spinoza, Berkeley, and Hegel.[2]

Referring to the Preface of *Science and Health*, we find it was as early as 1862 that Mrs. Eddy began to write down and impart to her friends the results of her Scriptural studies, but the actual discovery of her 'Science' she assigns to the year 1866. For some time to come, however, she describes herself as tottering along the path of Truth in her newly discovered world of Spirit, and almost modestly characterises her early writings

[1] Mrs. Eddy was at one time very closely connected with spiritualism.

[2] See *Rudimentary Divine Science*, p. 30.

as 'only infantile lispings of the Truth.' By 1875 these 'infantile lispings' had assumed a definite and imposing form, and were published under the title of *Science and Health, with Key to the Scriptures*, 'the first book,' as the authoress assures us, 'recorded in history which elucidates a pathological science purely mental.' Previously to this remarkable publication, Mrs. Eddy had circulated pamphlets on the subject of divine healing among her 'loyal students,' and had practised her curative methods with a certain amount of success. The curious were thus induced to join her classes, and in time some of these, and other pupils of the late Dr. Quimby, started mind-healing branches of their own, to the 'Mother's' great annoyance. Speaking of the published works of these rivals, or 'impostors,' as she frankly calls them, the 'Reverend Mary B. Eddy' writes in the Preface to her *magnum opus*—'Various books on mental-healing have since been issued, most of which are incorrect in theory, and filled with plagiarisms from *Science and Health*.' Elsewhere these spiritual guide-books are described as 'silly publications, whose

only correct or salient points are borrowed without credit 'from the same fountain-head of Truth.'

These false prophets, however, despite Mrs. Eddy's condemnation, obtained the same averages of successful cures, and, what to most of them appears of even greater importance, were equally prosperous in their financial returns. For the rediscoverer of Christianity and her imitators find it not inconsistent with their doctrinal contempt for things material to enjoy the substantial blessings of this world; in fact, the income of the apostle of the Immaterialists has, if one may judge from her present luxurious circumstances, proved as satisfactorily on the increase as have her converts.

Some of the other leaders of so-called 'Christian Science' and 'Divine Science' mind-healing sects may now be mentioned, but space forbids more than the giving of their names, and a few brief details. Most of the teachers of this so-called metaphysical line of thought are authors, and some of them include in their educational systems the study of hypnotism, psychometry, telepathy, and clairvoyance; they, in fact,

dabble freely in the workings of the as yet little understood mental substratum, and plunge in bold assertions where serious students of psychology venture only to speculate.

The list may be begun with a former disciple of the 'Mother's,' 'Dr.' Arens, who, deserting her, set up for himself, established a 'university' in Boston—'University of the Science of Spirit,'—and published a volume entitled *Old Theology in its Application to the Healing of the Sick*, and numerous pamphlets on the same subject. Although the authoress of *Science and Health, with Key to the Scriptures*, had been careful, with a worldly wisdom which does her credit, to protect her work by copyright, this rival light apparently poached on her literary and spiritual preserves, and was consequently sued by the aggrieved lady,[1] who, in true 'Christian' spirit, speaks of him as 'a jay in borrowed plumes,' and 'the most ignorant and empty-minded scholar I ever remember of examining' (*sic*).

'Dr.' W. F. Evans is also a voluminous

[1] Mrs. Eddy has also legally sued another of her renegade or independent pupils, one Kenedy, for infringing her copyright.

writer, and the author of *The Primitive Mind Cure*, *Mental Cure*, *Mental Medicine*, *Divine Law of Cure*, *Esoteric Christianity and Mental Therapeutics*, and other works. Mr. Evans began life as an evangelical minister, which profession he gave up first for Swedenborgianism, and this in turn for 'Christian Science' mind-healing.

Mrs. Crosse may be named next, as she has a large and comparatively fashionable following in America, is a successful 'healer,' and Mrs. Eddy's particular rival.[1] All these so-called 'Scientists' are, by the way, indiscriminately condemned by the 'Rev. Mary B. Eddy' and her apostles as 'false teachers'; the Eddyites are jealous labourers, and the vineyard of Truth must be cultivated by none but those favoured ones who have drunk at their fountain-head of 'inspiration.'

Mr. Henry Wood, a florid writer, affects Emersonian idealism, and poses as the philosopher of 'Christian Science.' Mr. Wood's

[1] Mrs. Crosse originally studied under Mrs. Eddy, but although she now teaches much the same doctrines, she repudiates her. Her fee for a course of twelve lessons in Science is $10,000.

contempt for medical science is not so wholesale or consistent as Mrs. Eddy's, for he advises the wise 'Scientist' who may chance to break a bone, or otherwise injure him or her-self structurally, to seek surgical aid. His best-known writings are *Ideal Suggestion through Mental Photography*, and *Studies in the Thought World.*

'Dr.' John Hamly Dewey is another teacher who enjoys some reputation and popularity (author of *The Way, the Truth, and the Life*, *The Pathway of the Spirit*, *The Open Door, or the Secret of Jesus*, *The Genesis and Exodus of the Human Spirit*, *The New Testament Occultism*, etc.).

'Dr.' Charles Brodie Patterson, teacher, lecturer, and author was in London for a short time this summer (author of *Seeking the Kingdom*, *Beyond the Clouds*; editor of *The Library of Health*, etc.).

'Dr.' Hazzard, President of the New York 'School of Primitive and Practical Christian Science.'[1]

[1] For a specimen of Mr. Hazzard's spiritual composition see page 199 of Appendix, where a 'Prayer for a Dyspeptic' is transcribed from his text-book.

Horatio Dresser, a pupil and follower of P. P. Quimby (author of *The Power of Silence*, *The Meaning of Suffering*, *The Immanent God*, etc.).

Mrs. M. E. Cramer of San Francisco is the leader of the 'Divine Healers' (*Lessons in Science and Healing*, *Divine Science and the Christianity of Christ*, *and Christian Science and Gnosticism compared*, *Genesis Lessons*. This last work is described by the authoress as the outcome of 'a knowledge of the mathematics of Divine Science, with an accuracy that belongs only to God manifesting himself in creation').

Leander E. Whipple (*The Philosophy of Mental Healing*).

Fannie B. James (*Studies in the Science of Divine Healing*, *Words suggesting how to Heal*, etc.).

Dr. W. H. Holcomb (*Condensed Thoughts about Christian Science*, *Power of Thought in the Production and Cure of Disease*, etc.).

W. J. Colville (*Spiritual Science of Health and Healing*, *Spiritual Therapeutics*, *or Divine Science*, etc.).

Anna W. Mills (*Practical Metaphysics for Healing and Self-Culture*).

Jane W. Yarnall (*Practical Healing for Mind and Body*).

Leo Virgo (*The Philosophy of Denial, What is Matter?*)

D. D. Bryant (*Christian Science Teacher and Healer*).

Mrs. Grimke (*Personified Unthinkables*).

Miss K. Taylor (*Selfhood lost in Godhood*).

Miss F. Henrietta Lord (*Christian Science and Healing*).

Ralph Waldo Trine (*In Tune with the Infinite*, etc.).

W. P. Phelon (*Esoteric Vibrations*).[1]

Et cætera, almost *ad infinitum*, for this list is but a modest selection from the mass of mystic

[1] There are also numerous periodical magazines connected with the various branches, or, if not actually connected, dealing with this line of 'advanced thought.' I have only come across the following few:—

Mind (monthly, New York).

Harmony (monthly, San Francisco. Edited by M. E. and C. L. Cramer).

The New Man (monthly, Beloit, Kansas).

Expression (monthly, Mrs. Gillon, London).

The Life (a weekly journal of Christian Metaphysics and Healing. A. P. Barton, Editor, Kansas City).

'literature' which is apparently appreciated by large numbers, who are either fascinated and impressed by the unintelligible, or who find old truths more palatable in new forms. Varying greatly in quality, a few of these treatises have some of the borrowed flavour of the well-worn *De Imitatione*, of Emerson's writings, and other ethical teachers; while others, and alas! the majority, are simply the emotional outpourings of would-be counsellors of perfection, these counsellors being unfortunately gifted in the art of phrase-making, but severely limited in reason and understanding. 'Whoever should bundle up a lusty fagot of the fooleries of human wisdom would produce wonders!' wrote the old French essayist, which caustic saw a survey of the fagots of this new American theology helps one not a little to appreciate.

A conviction must here be expressed, however, with regard to these Faith-curers in general—viz. the 'Christian Scientists,' 'Divine Scientists,' mesmeric healers, etc.—that a fairly large proportion of their practitioners are honest, earnest, and self-denying enthusiasts who are profoundly convinced of the truth of their mission,

and therefore deserving of respect, however exaggerated and absurd their views may be.[1]

Before altogether leaving the subject of Mrs. Eddy and her 'Science,' it should be mentioned that her own sect is now divided into two factions, named respectively the 'Bakerite' and the 'Eddyite,' the chief difference between them being that the former is a kind of conservative offshoot, whose aim it is to avoid the more vulnerable points in the Eddy scheme.

Connected with the 'Mother's' work there is (1) active propaganda consisting of a college, the so-called 'Massachusetts Metaphysical College,'[2] which instructs students in spiritual obstetrics as well as in metaphysics, and confers

[1] The following extract from an American writer, who discusses 'Christian Science' at some length, may be appropriately quoted here: 'There is a large and growing class of people, calling themselves "Christian Scientists," who ignore the fundamental absurdities of the theory of the founder of the sect, and content themselves with the knowledge that the practice produces good results. Each one of these formulates a theory of his own, and each one finds that, measured by the standard of results, his theory is correct.'—*The Law of Psychic Phenomena* (1892), Thomson Jay Hudson, chap. xii. p. 163.

[2] This College was opened in Boston in 1881, and chartered for medical purposes (vide *Science and Health*, Preface, p. xi). 'During seven years some four thousand students were taught by the author (Mrs. Eddy) in this college.' 'She closed her college, October 1889, in the height of its prosperity, with a

high-sounding degrees; (2) a journal, published monthly, in which accounts of *successful* demonstrations over sickness are recorded; (3) an association calling itself the 'National Christian Scientist Association,' and (4) churches innumerable erected by the faithful in all parts of the land, for the disciples of Mrs. Eddy, who, with an enthusiasm worthy of a better cause, subscribe their dollars with self-sacrificing and open-handed liberality.[1]

The mention of one more fact shall close this account of the 'Scientists,'—a fact significant and worth consideration. It is this, that women and not men take the most prominent part in the principal departments of the work, viz. as 'healers,' as class instructors, and as pastors, or 'readers' (which is their official denomination) in the churches of 'Christ Scientist' (*sic*). The male element in this church, though not by any means altogether

deep-lying conviction that the next two years of her life should be given to the preparation of the revision, in 1891, of *Science and Health*' (*ibid.* p. xii). Was not this 'deep-lying conviction' strengthened by the fact that the law threatened interference with her illegal conferring of 'degrees'?

[1] There are about 300 organised 'Churches,' and 100 Training Institutes in the States.

absent, is remarkably out of the common proportion to the female ; but then we are assured, in explanation of this, that the average man is very undeveloped as regards his spiritual condition. Nevertheless, this fact appears to me very significant, for, perhaps with old-fashioned prejudice, I still suspect that my own sex is inferior to the other in certain qualities, such as those of exact observation, mental balance, accuracy of statement, and the logical faculties.

At any rate, this creed, invented, demonstrated, expounded, and diffused by American ladies, is surely the natural outcome, in emotional natures and untrained minds, of a smattering of spiritualism, mesmerism, mental therapeutics, mysticism, and metaphysics, coupled with a profound and lofty disdain for the most elementary scientific knowledge.

Do not the results of the jumble of all this miscellaneous information (?) which we have been discussing remind one of the poet's comment or caution ?—

> 'A little learning is a dangerous thing ;
> Drink deep, or taste not the Pierian spring :
> There shallow draughts intoxicate the brain,
> But drinking largely sobers us again.'

CHAPTER III

SOME HYSTERICAL EPIDEMICS

HAVING thus far spoken of the powers of the mind only in effecting cures, I propose considering its results from another point of view, and noticing some of the hysterical epidemics which have in times past and present affected great numbers of ignorant people whose minds, weakened by superstitions and overwrought by fanaticism, were subjected to the influence of a *dominant idea*.

The large share that imagination has in the production of diseases, physical and mental, is remarkably exemplified by the Dancing Mania which prevailed on the Continent in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, and Tarantism, a South Italian form of this strange nervous disorder, which is of uncertain, but probably far more ancient, origin.

Almost in our own times there have been similar epidemics, as, for instance, the Jansenist *Convulsionnaires* of last century, and the 'Shakers,' 'Jumpers,' and 'Jerkers' of various forms of Protestant Revivalism of still more recent times.[1]

Some twenty years after the 'Black Death' had swept over the face of Europe, wiping out the larger proportion of its population, the Dancing Mania originated in the Rhine district, and thence spread like the plague over western and southern Germany[2] and the Netherlands. Bands of men and women with garlands on their heads gathered together in the streets, market-squares, churches, and other public places, and, forming circles, they danced hand

[1] The leaping-ague of Scotland also belongs to this class.

[2] This mania, which was called the Dance of St. John or St. Vitus, appeared first at Aix-la-Chapelle in July 1374, and then in some of the principal towns of Belgium, *e.g.* Liége, Utrecht, Tongres, and others. Cologne and Metz were affected by the mania soon after it began, and Strassburg was visited by it in 1418. In the last town the sufferers were taken by order of the Magistrates to the Chapel of St. Vitus to be cured of their malady by this Saint's intercessions. This practice is still commemorated in the grotesque 'Procession of Jumping Saints' which is held every Whitsuntide at Echternach, Luxemburg.

in hand for hours in wild delirium until, utterly exhausted, they fell to the ground groaning in pain or foaming at the mouth and senseless. Bystanders then charitably swathed the bodies of these demented fanatics with cloths, and this afforded relief until a recurrence of the attack.

Men and women of all ages, and boys and girls, joined in the mad revels as the craze spread. Married women left their homes, children their parents, servants their masters, and peasants their field-labours. Insensible to external impressions, regardless of onlookers, these poor wretches flung themselves wildly about: with minds on fire they were haunted by Satanic visions and phantom spirits, by whom they believed themselves impelled and driven to take part in the mad pastime. The local authorities and the Church did their utmost to allay and stamp out the epidemic; but in vain, for despite all their efforts it lasted some two hundred years, during which time measures gentle and vigorous proved all unavailing. 'Where the disease was completely developed,' writes J. F. C. Hecker, the great German

authority on this subject, 'the attack commenced with epileptic convulsions.'[1]

Hecker then looks into the circumstances and causes which are likely to have given rise to the mania. His conclusions as to these may be briefly specified as follows: the overflowing of the rivers Rhine and Maine, which caused great distress; the incessant feuds of the barons and consequent insecurity of property, oppression of the people, and lawlessness; the generally unsettled state of affairs, and, lastly, the moral deterioration consequent on the ravages of the Black Death. The train being thus laid, it was finally set alight by the sensational celebration of the festival of St. John the Baptist in July 1374.

Thus to physical, social, and religious conditions was due the morbid state of inability to withstand this subtle force of suggestion; reason being temporarily in abeyance, dancing became a *dominant idea*; it took entire possession of its victims elect—those, namely, of hysterical predisposition—who felt themselves

[1] *The Epidemics of the Middle Ages*, by J. F. C. Hecker, M.D. Translated by B. G. Babington, M.D., F.R.S., 1859, p. 81.

irresistibly impelled to give way to this remarkable form of emotional expression.

Of very much the same character as St. Vitus' dance was the Apulian Tarantism, a mania induced by the bite, or often only supposed bite, of a ground spider[1] common in southern Italy. This nervous disorder was of very ancient origin, but reached its greatest height in the seventeenth century;[2] its causes were in all probability much the same as those accountable for its northern prototype. Men's minds were overwrought; they were consequently morbidly sensitive and hypochondriacal; they were constantly afflicted by the most hideous epidemics—the Oriental plague, leprosy, and small-pox; miserable social conditions aggravated matters,[3] and religion, instead of affording spiritual comfort and relief, tended only to

[1] This was the *Lycosa Tarantula*, the largest of European spiders. Modern experiments have proved the bite of this spider to be no more poisonous than that of a wasp.

[2] The first extant notice of Tarantism is in Niccolo Perotti's *Cornicopia Linguae Latinae*, ed. 1489.

[3] A Swedish physician, who visited Apulia in 1756 for the purpose of investigating Tarantism, arrived at the conclusion that this form of hypochondria was due to the natives' mode of living. Their food consisted principally of green vegetables, oysters, and periwinkles.—Carl Engel's *Music and Medicine*.

intensify their morbid state. 'So long as the doctrines of Christianity were blended with so much mysticism, these unhallowed disorders prevailed to an important extent,' writes Hecker, 'and, even in our own days, we find them propagated with the greatest facility where the existence of superstition produces the same effect in more limited districts as it once did among whole nations.'[1]

Tarantism did not invariably express itself in the delirium of the dance; its symptoms were very varied. Taking either a cheerful or melancholy turn, it subjected the sufferers to epileptic fits and to hallucinations which frequently found vent in wild and dangerous movements, as the brandishing of knives and swords. A passion for peculiar kinds of music was a notable symptom, and in this the *tarantati* found great relief, as also in the sight of water; certain colours likewise affected them, some affording them intense pleasure, others increasing their frenzy. As in ancient times, the soft fluent notes of the flute had in some cases proved efficacious in soothing

[1] *Op. cit.*, p. 106.

sufferers from sciatica or nervous paroxysms, so with highly-strung and emotional Italians music was employed for the alleviation of this malady, and it was even deemed indispensable by popular opinion for the saving of life.

Special music was composed for this object,[1] and bands of musicians wandered about southern Italy in the summer months, playing in the towns and villages for the relief of the *tarantati*. This season of dancing and music was called *Il carnevaletto delle donne*, for it was women more especially who conducted the arrangements; so that throughout the country they saved up their spare money for the purpose of rewarding the welcome musicians, and many of them neglected their household employments to participate in this festival of the sick.[2]

[1] This music was of various kinds, adapted to the varying nature of the malady, and these compositions were distinguished by significant names, which had reference to the moods observed in the patients, 'whence it appears that they aimed at representing by these tunes even the idiosyncrasies of the mind as expressed in the countenances.'—Hecker, *op. cit.*, pp. 113, 114.

[2] A case of Tarantism was recorded in June 1840 by a Neapolitan physician in the *Raccoglitore Medico*. The sufferer was a peasant, native of a small village in the southern district of Terra d'Otranto. On the 'Tarantello' being played to him he jumped out of bed, became convulsive, and danced vigorously for two hours. After several repetitions of this musical dosing, he recovered.

Of much the same character were the Jansenist *Convulsionnaires* of Louis xv.'s reign, to whom brief allusion has already been made.

At the end of the seventeenth and in the first half of the eighteenth century, the two great Church parties in France—the Jesuits and the Jansenists—were in bitter opposition, and deeply involved in the political intrigues which were then rampant. In May 1727 François de Pâris,[1] a noted and greatly revered young cleric of the latter sect (*pieux et modeste Jansenist*, as the historian Guizot characterises him) died, and was buried in the cemetery of Saint-Médard, Faubourg Saint-Marcel, described by Barbier in his journal[2] as *un quartier fort mauvais et fort éloigné de la ville.* M. de Pâris had lived a charitable and ascetic life, and was consequently adored of the people, who at his death visited his tomb in large numbers. Ere long[3] it was rumoured among these faithful that miracles were taking place at the holy spot, and the

[1] Born 1690.

[2] Vide *Chronique de la Régence et du Règne de Louis XV.*, 1718-1763, *ou Journal de Barbier, avocat au Parlement de Paris.* In eight vols., vol. ii. p. 232, ed. 1858.

[3] Namely in 1731.

alleged prodigies were loudly advertised by the Jansenist leaders in support of their party.

As the reports of the divine manifestations at Saint-Médard spread, the visitors to the little cemetery augmented, the sick and curious assembling from all Paris and its environs round the good deacon's tomb. In proportion as these crowds of expectant and unhealthy fanatics increased, the reports of the miraculous phenomena grew, and strange forms of hysteria were developed. 'Patients were seized with convulsions and tetanic spasms, they rolled upon the ground like persons possessed, were thrown into violent contortions of their heads and limbs, and suffered the greatest oppression, accompanied by quickness and irregularity of pulse.'[1]

Summer and winter, and in all weathers, the crowds assembled in the old cemetery; from five A.M. to sundown they poured in and stood singing their devotional supplications and Te Deums[2] round the flat stone slab which covered

[1] Hecker, *op. cit.*, p. 136.
[2] Barbier's *Journal*, vol. ii. pp. 167, 232.

their uncanonised saint's remains. '*La tombe est toujours remplie de malades*,' wrote Barbier; '*les convulsions y sont encore plus fréquentes, et on publie de temps en temps des miracles nouveaux et considérables.*'[1]

These remarkable occurrences naturally created the greatest sensation in Paris; the Court party and ministers, the Jesuits and the clergy in general, were furious at the fact of miracles taking place at a Jansenist shrine; they pronounced these wonders of Satanic origin, declared them to be simulated by impostors bribed by their rivals, and exerted every means to throw discredit and ridicule on the *Convulsionnaires*, but in vain. '*Le peuple, une fois frappé, ne se désabuse pas aisément!*'[2]

The government at last took the matter in hand, and the police closed the cemetery by order of Cardinal Fleury;[3] but the crowds

[1] Barbier's *Journal*, vol. ii. p. 232.

[2] *Ibid.*, vol. ii. p. 170.

[3] January the 29th, 1732. Voltaire visited the cemetery and found some wag had inscribed the following lines on the wall:—

'*De par le Roi, défence à Dieu*
De faire miracle en ce lieu.'

only filled the church of Saint-Médard instead, all efforts failing to suppress the epidemic, which continued under the rose until wiped out by the outbreak of a yet greater insanity in 1790.

It is noteworthy that the Saint-Médard miracles were credited not only by the poor and ignorant, but by numbers also of the rich and educated class. Members of *la haute noblesse*, *gens de la première distinction*, ecclesiastics and nuns, repaired to the tomb of *le bienfaisant Pâris*; free-thinkers were even in some cases compelled to a belief in the supernatural phenomena by the demonstrations they themselves witnessed. Hume wrote as follows concerning them in his *Philosophical Essays*: 'There surely never was so great a number of miracles ascribed to one person, as those which were lately said to have been wrought in France upon the tomb of the Abbé Pâris. The curing of the sick, giving hearing to the deaf and sight to the blind, were everywhere talked of as the effect of the holy sepulchre. But, what is more extraordinary, many of the miracles were immediately proved upon the

spot before judges of unquestioned credit and distinction, in a learned age, and in the most eminent theatre that is now in the world.'[1]

The Saint-Médard cult gave rise to much controversial literature *pro* and *con*. The 'convulsions' would never have made the sensation they did had it not been that they served party purposes: served the Jansenists, namely, as proofs of divine attestations of the righteousness of their cause. '*S'il n'y avoit point eu ici deux partis*,' wrote Barbier, '*les miracles de M. Pâris auroient passé doux comme miel*.'[2]

The most ardent and best-known of the champions for the *Convulsionnaires* was Carré de Montgeron, the son of one of Louis XIV.'s Court officials, and a deputy. Montgeron was a rich and dissipated worldling, and a deist, if not actually a sceptic. Having his interest aroused by the sensational accounts current in the town, he went thoroughly into the subject, investigated the cases, collected evidence on the

[1] Page 195.
[2] *Op. cit.*, vol. ii. p. 244.

cures from physicians, clergymen, magistrates, and from the *Convulsionnaires* themselves, and published the results of his labours in a thick quarto volume, illustrated with woodcuts engraved from nature, entitled, *La Vérité des Miracles opérés par l'Intercession de M. de Pâris, démontrée contre M. l'Archevêque de Sens.*

It need hardly be added that the author of this laborious thaumaturgic work was himself converted to a belief in the divine and supernatural origin of the phenomena he chronicled.[1]

Some of the cases recorded by Montgeron were certainly of a most startling nature. Cures of apparently incurable blindness, paralysis, dropsy, cancer, etc., were wrought either at the tomb itself or by the application to the diseased part of earth therefrom. The manifestations, however, were unfortunately not

[1] For an interesting account of these *Convulsionnaires*, see *Spiritualism and Allied Causes and Conditions of Nervous Derangement*, by W. Hammond, M.D., 1876, pp. 219, 220, 221, 296, 297.

Refer also to an article entitled, 'The Faith Cure,' by J. M. Charcot, *New Review*, January 1893, for some noteworthy observations on one of Montgeron's most marvellous cases.

confined to the alleviations of suffering and the restoration of health, but took the most unwholesome forms : hysterical paroxysms, fits of catalepsy, convulsions, hallucinations, prophesyings, visions, and the voluntary suffering of horrible bodily tortures, were the most common types of this epidemic. Nothing, in fact, was too extravagant for the frenzied enthusiasts of Saint-Médard. '*Sous le prétexte de la gloire de Dieu, il y a là des gens*,' wrote Barbier in 1734,[1] '*par zèle et par religion, capable de tout tenter et de s'exposer à tous les supplices*.'

This chronicler describes a woman who prophesied and spoke like an angel ; another who danced on her head; a man who persuaded his co-religionists that he had met the prophet Elias, who had announced to him on behalf of the Almighty that he was the spotless lamb destined to die for the sins of man.[2]

It is unnecessary, however, to prolong this account of one of the many forms of insanity that an overwrought religious enthusiasm has been responsible for. The supernatural has so commonly been courted by leaders of rival

[1] *Op. cit.*, vol. ii. p. 525. [2] *Ibid.*, vol. ii. p. 525.

theological parties, and miracles have ever proved effective in gaining a large following among the masses. As Barbier expressed it: '*Ce n'est jamais que par du miraculeux et du surprenant que les religions et les cultes ont pris faveur dans tous les temps et dans tous les pays.*'

Enough has been said in the foregoing pages to prove how far-reaching are the influences of emotions when uncontrolled by the rational will, when preference has been given to the feelings over the will, and men's minds have been *possessed* by a dominant idea, so that I do not propose writing at any length of the effects produced by the preaching of John Wesley and other Methodists, nor of the 'Shaking Quakers,'[1] the 'Methodist

[1] The 'Shakers' were an offshoot of the Quaker sect, and date back to the middle of the eighteenth century. Their original leaders were James Wardley and his wife, and their apostle was Ann Lee, the daughter of a Manchester blacksmith. This Ann Lee, who was absolutely uneducated, persuaded her followers that she was to be born again, 'completely redeemed from all the propensities of a fallen nature, in July 1790,' and that she was destined to be the incarnation of a second divine emissary on earth. She was called 'Mother' by her co-religionists, as they regarded her as the Mother of all living in the 'New Creation.' The sect itself was nicknamed the 'Shakers' from

Jumpers,'[1] the 'Kentucky Jerkers,'[2] and others.

How quaintly were the wild and unspiritual scenes that Wesley's exhortations incited interpreted by the preacher, who saw in them simply 'outpourings of the Spirit of God.' The mad ravings, epileptic fits, spasms, and convulsions with which large proportions of his congregations were attacked, he accounted for to his own great satisfaction as the effects of the 'arrows of the Lord.' He describes one of these unholy scenes as follows in his journal; the preacher on this occasion was a brother minister.

the shaking indulged in by its members during their devotions: it flourished in England and America.

[1] The 'Jumpers' were a sect of Welsh and Cornish Methodists, the followers of Harris, Rowlands, and Williams. At the close of the sermon the preacher himself would give the example of jumping, which was promptly followed by the congregation, who kept up this Davidian exercise for several hours. 'David danced before the ark, and the lame man, on being cured, leaped and praised God.'

[2] The American revivalist sect, with whom conversions found outward expression in jerking fits, flourished in Kentucky and Western America early in this century. Hundreds of people at the camp-meeting services were seized with these fits, fell down and rolled about, twitching and jerking as if goaded by red-hot irons. One observer, Mr. G. Baxter, described having himself seen over three thousand persons fall down at one of their monster meetings (*Temp.* 1798-1805).

'While he (Mr. Hicks) was preaching, fifteen or sixteen persons felt the arrows of the Lord and dropped down. A few of these cried out with the utmost violence and little intermission for some hours, while the rest made no great noise, but continued struggling as in the pangs of death.'

I would in conclusion quote a passage from another of Hecker's monographs, namely that on the *Child-Pilgrimages of the Middle Ages*, which was another singular outcome of over-strained religious emotion—

'Of all the emotions it is quite manifest that those of religion operate most upon the popular masses; it is therefore these above all others which have furnished pathology with a multitude of forms of nervous diseases, most various and dismal, often extraordinary and hardly comprehensible, seldom, therefore, or almost never understood, and this in nations most diverse in creed, from the ancient mythology to the most recent Christian sects. In this respect no confession appears to have any advantage over the others, when it is pushed to a certain morbid elevation of religious

feelings. In their effect on the nervous system they all agree, and it is chiefly mental and emotional, that is to say, cerebral and spinal, diseases which we see arise from the source of overstrained religious feelings.'[1]

[1] *Child-Pilgrimages*, translated by Robert H. Cooke, M.R.C.S., author of *Epidemic Mental Diseases of Children*.

CHAPTER IV

MENTAL THERAPEUTICS

'All the phenomena of the Universe are presumably in some way continuous, and it is unscientific to call in the aid of mysterious agencies when, with every fresh advance in knowledge, it is shown that ether vibrations have powers and attributes abundantly equal to any demand—even to the transmission of thought.'—Sir William Crookes's *Address to the British Association*, 1898.

It being an incontestable fact, then, that remarkable therapeutic results are obtainable by means other than those commonly understood as rational and medical, two important questions naturally present themselves for consideration:

(1) How do scientific men account for these phenomena?

(2) What diseases have proved themselves amenable to mental treatment?

Both these questions (but more especially the first) will involve us in a discussion of matters psychical as well as physical, for the phenomena

of the mind-cure pertains as essentially to the former as to the latter.

The first point, then, which demands attention is the manner in which the mind acts on the physical machinery of man.

Till comparatively recent times the subject of mental healing had not received the scientific attention due to its great importance. Mind-curing in all its various forms has ever indeed been a familiar phenomenon, as we have just seen, but its results have too commonly been accepted with a contented ignorance, and its *modus operandi* not even deemed worthy of investigation. Now, however, the subject of psycho-therapeutics is honourably established in medical science, and is studied in all its forms by professional experts and specialists.

This is particularly the case on the Continent, where schools of hypnotism exist and the most divergent hypotheses are discussed.[1] In France,

[1] In France—Liébeault, Bernheim, Binet, Janet, Bérillon, Charcot, the late Auguste Voisin; in Switzerland—Forel; in Germany—Schrenck-Notzing, Weinhold, Berger, Heidenhain, Moll; in Austria—Breuer, Freud; in Italy—Magini and Morselli; in Holland—Van Renterghem and Van Eeden; in Sweden—Wetterstrand; in Belgium—Delbœuf, are the most noted workers in this field.

Germany, Sweden, and Holland physicians of the highest repute have applied themselves to a theoretic and practical study of its phenomena; they have, by patient observation and careful experiments, collected a mass of evidence and established a strong basis of facts, and many of them, making a therapeutic use of hypnotism, have succeeded in working 'miracle' cures of as remarkable a nature as those achieved by quacks and thaumaturgists.

But what is hypnotism?

All have a more or less vague conception of this psycho-physical phenomenon; the majority, perhaps, condemning it as a dangerous abnormal brain-state[1] tending to weaken the moral fibre. It will be well, however, to give some definition of its main characteristics and a short *résumé* of the present state of knowledge on the subject for those who have not hitherto devoted much attention to it.

That subtle and almost indefinable entity, the mind of man, is surmised to have a substratum whereof in our normal states we are

[1] Those who object to hypnotism on this ground do not, however, consistently object to chloroform or ether.

not cognisant. Some psychological speculators speak of mind, in fact, in a somewhat rough-and-ready manner as being of a dual character,[1] a personality consisting of a conscious and a subconscious intelligence.

The latter has been variously named: *e.g.* 'Unconscious Mental Modification,' Sir William Hamilton;[2] 'Mental Latency,' John Stuart Mill;[3] 'Unconscious Cerebration,' W. B. Carpenter;[4] the 'Unconscious Reason,' Edward von Hartman;[5] 'Subconsciousness,' J. Ward,[6] James Sully,[7] and others; the 'Subliminal Consciousness,' F. W. H. Myers, E. Gurney, and other members of the Society for Psychical Research; the 'Subjective Mind,' or 'Intelligence,' etc., and it is spoken of with a terse descriptiveness by Mr. Myers as the 'hidden or submerged strata of our being.'

The naming of this unknown quantity, this lower level of mental life, has, in fact, ever

[1] Carpenter speaks of this dual personality as 'that remarkable abnormality known as Double Consciousness.'

[2] *Lectures on Metaphysics and Logic*, vol. i. Lect. xviii.

[3] *Mental Physiology*, p. 459.

[4] *An Examination of Sir William Hamilton's Philosophy.*

[5] *Philosophie des Unbewussten.*

[6] *Encyclopædia Brit.*, Art. Psychology. [7] *The Human Mind.*

proved itself a teasing problem ; some suggested terms, such as Leibnitz's 'perceptions without apperceptions or consciousness,' or 'insensible perception,' and Hartman's 'unconscious reason,' being, strictly speaking, contradictions and violations of the proper use of language. 'For,' writes Sir William Hamilton, 'perception properly involves the notion of consciousness, and reason is *ipso facto* conscious.'

Whatever be the nature of this subconscious or subliminal self, we know by effects that it possesses many faculties which play a most important part in our mental economy. This indistinct consciousness, for instance, 'includes all that mass of vague sensation, thought, impulse, and feeling which forms the dim background of our clear mental life. Thus, for the most part, the sensations which accompany the organic processes, as digestion, respiration, and circulation, remain below the level of distinct consciousness. We are at almost every moment aware of the presence of vague feelings and thoughts, some of which may afterwards emerge into the full light of consciousness.'[1]

[1] *The Human Mind*, by James Sully, vol. i. p. 75.

By some psychologists this subliminal self is surmised to possess an absolute perfect memory, of which, however, we cannot always make use at will, for the stored facts often cannot be raised to order above the 'threshold of consciousness.'

It is to this substratum of the mental system that the phenomena of hypnotism and mind cure are chiefly confined, for it is this unexplored force which acts directly on the organs of the body, controlling the nerves, affecting the tissues and the chemical character of the blood, etc.

This subliminal self which, unrealised by us, plays such an important part, is extraordinarily sensitive or amenable to suggestion; and the action of suggestion, when sufficiently intense, influences and modifies our physical organism to a very great extent. Hypnotism, as we shall see, helps to intensify the force of any one suggestion made, for it inhibits others, and the mind is consequently all the more powerfully possessed by any idea introduced, and this *one* being unrestrained or unaffected by the train or fringe of thought ordinarily

attendant, must needs be acted up to the *fullest possible extent*.

That the science of mental therapeutics rested mainly on the action of suggestion on the system was first definitely demonstrated by Liébeault some thirty years ago.

This great truth had, however, been previously caught sight of by other workers in the field of psycho-therapeutics, but it was the hitherto unknown doctor of Nancy who worked the mine, found the auriferous vein, cleared it of the *débris* in which it was buried out of sight, and, by his patient labours, experimental demonstrations, and moral courage, gained recognition for what, until then, had been only vague and discredited theories.

Writing on this subject, one of our foremost practitioners and investigators in this particular line says: 'Dr. Liébeault's system is the outcome of the collection and classification of many isolated facts previously neglected or misunderstood.'[1] In 1866 this medical pioneer published his great work, *Du Sommeil et des États*

[1] *Psycho-Therapeutics, or the Treatment by Hypnotism and Suggestion*, by C. Lloyd Tuckey, M.D., 1891, p. 42.

Analogues, considérés surtout au point de vue de l'action du Morale sur le Physique, 'in which he gave to the world a full description of the means used by him and an account of cases successfully treated. But little notice was taken of it at the time; and even in Nancy, where Doctor Liébeault lived a retired life, devoted to the poor, among whom he practised, he was regarded as, at the best, an amiable but mistaken enthusiast.'[1]

Long before Liébeault's time, however, the close relation of mind and body, and the possibility of influencing the latter through, or by, the former for medical purposes had been caught sight of, and attempts had been made to form a working hypothesis from the observed phenomena. In the latter half of the eighteenth century, a German physician, Friedrich Anton Mesmer, made a special study of this hitherto neglected subject, and the result of his investigations and theorising was the formation of a system which is now known by his name.

With this quasi-discoverer's theories we need not concern ourselves here, but some account

[1] *Psycho-Therapeutics*, p. 2.

of his methods and their results may appropriately be given as illustrating the effects of fashion, imitation (practically suggestion), and induced hysteria in causing cures.

Mesmer had received a clerical education, but eventually he adopted medicine as his profession and took his degree as a qualified physician. Being a native of Swabia, he studied and started in practice in Vienna, where he evolved his celebrated theory of 'animal magnetism,' which was very much the outcome of a study of the works of Paracelsus and Van Helmont. Finding the Austrian capital a good field for the supernatural, the magnetic thaumaturgist prospered for some years, during which he experimented with his methods and made numbers of astonishing and sensational cures. Eventually, however, he found it advisable to leave Vienna on account of the antagonism of the medical profession, by whom he was regarded as an adventurer and charlatan; and, travelling about Germany, he was well received in many places and worked wonder-cures wherever he went, thereby increasing his reputation as an almost infallible healer.

In the year 1778 Mesmer reached Paris, where he established himself in a humble quarter of the town. Here, in the home of free-thought, of materialism, and of scientific research—in the Paris of Voltaire, Lavoisier, and the Encyclopædists—the Swabian empiric found the richest soil for his quackery and the most enthusiastic credulity. Here it was that fame and fortune were made. Rank and fashion crowded round him; patients of all classes flocked to the little house in the Place Vendôme; some of the noted scientific leaders of the town were converted to the magnetic doctrine, and the numbers who wished to be magnetised were so great that the 'doctor' had to employ a *valet toucheur* as auxiliary operator. This, however, not sufficing, the famous *baquet* was devised, round which some thirty persons could be treated simultaneously.

The *baquet* was a circular wooden case or trough about one foot high and four feet in diameter, with a lid pierced with numerous holes, through which issued jointed and moveable iron rods. At the bottom of the trough there was an elaborate arrangement of bottles

and metal filings, which were by way of supplying the operative force.

This *baquet* stood in the centre of a large heated, dimly lit apartment, hung with heavy curtains. The patients were ranged in several rows around the mechanical operator, connected with each other by cords, and with the *baquet* by holding its rods. The heavy odour of rare and fragrant spices, and the faint tones of melodious music proceeding from harp or harmonicon in an adjoining room, added to the impressiveness of the mysterious proceedings; silence was strictly maintained. Mesmer supplemented the *baquet* treatment by passes and manipulation. Arrayed in flowered lilac brocade and carrying a long iron wand, he moved about among his patients, touching now one, now another with his rod, or by other means, such as fixed gazing, he worked upon their overwrought nerves and excited expectation with varying results.

'So far as we are now able to judge,' write MM. Binet and Fere in describing Mesmer's methods, 'Mesmer excited in his patients nervous crises in which we may trace the

principal signs of the severe hysteric attacks which may be observed daily. Silence, darkness, and the emotional expectation of some extraordinary phenomenon, when several people are collected together in one place, are conditions known to encourage convulsive crises in predisposed subjects.'[1]

Soon Mesmer's house in Place Vendôme proved too small to accommodate the crowds who visited him, and he moved into a large *hôtel* in which he established four *baquets*, one of these being for the gratuitous use of the poor. Since, however, the latter did not suffice, the popular thaumaturgist undertook to magnetise a large tree. What bounds has credulity when fashion takes the lead? Hundreds of the sick crowded round the mesmerised tree, every leaf whereof was declared to be endowed with the curative virtue; attaching themselves to its trunk or branches with cords, they sat around it for hours in fervent hope of happy results.

After enjoying some years of delirious popu-

[1] *Animal Magnetism*, by A. Binet and C. Fere, 1887 (International Scientific Series), p. 11.

larity, Mesmer's treatment and his magnetic theory were subjected to experimental examination by a government commission composed of eminent medical men.

The report which resulted from this official investigation condemned mesmeric practice by the denial of the existence of an 'animal magnetic fluid'; stated the belief of the commissioners that the effects obtained by the quack and his disciples were due to the workings of the imagination in the subjects, and gave it as their opinion that 'all treatment in public in which magnetism is employed must in the end be productive of evil results.'

This unfavourable verdict, which was widely advertised, was the death-blow of Mesmer's fame and popularity; for not only was he discredited and tabooed by his profession, but deserted by the crowds who had flocked to his magnificent *hôtel*, and waited in excited expectation in its mysterious saloons for the magical treatment which was to cure all ills.

Before leaving Mesmer, a few words may be said concerning the state of scientific knowledge in France at the time that he took up

his abode in the Place Vendôme. I would try and show how science itself helped indirectly to pave the way for such men as he and a yet more notorious charlatan, Cagliostro, Prince of Quacks, 'Prophet and Thaumaturge,' 'Grand Copha,' who appeared on the scene a few years later with his '*Elixir of immortal youth*,' his '*Pentagon for abolishing original sin*,' and his '*Egyptian Masonry*.'

During the latter half of last century medical knowledge and natural philosophy were passing through an important transitional period. Antoine Lavoisier was busy in his laboratory. Other eminent scientists such as Fournoy, Berthollet, Lagrange, Laplace, and Monge were engrossed in their experiments and speculations: new light was being thrown by this band of enthusiasts on the phenomena of organic life, and, by their researches, some insight was being gained into the hitherto obscure natural forces of electricity and magnetism. A general enthusiasm for knowledge prevailed, and was carried in all directions. Periods of such popular interest in science, superficial and ostentatious though the interest may be, yet

always prove periods of progress; but, on the other hand, 'some scientific discoveries excite popular superstition by rendering the marvellous probable.'[1] Such was just the case in Paris at the end of the eighteenth century; and the very activity and progress in rational knowledge, and the popular interest taken in natural science, served in a way to prepare men's minds for Mesmer's mysterious revelations, and to foster their instincts of credulity.

When the great magnetist retired from Paris and passed out of sight into the obscurity of a more or less general condemnation,[2] others arose, who, to use a hackneyed expression, took leaves from his book, experimented with his methods, and handed down his theories, assured, doubtless, that his system must contain elements of truth to account for the number of undoubted successes obtained by his treatment. No great movement, however, took place in favour of mesmeric methods until

[1] Binet and Fere, *op. cit.*

[2] F. A. Mesmer died in 1815, at the ripe age of eighty-two, at Meersburg, on the Bodensee, neglected, discredited, and remembered only as a notable quack.

about the middle of this century, when a Manchester surgeon, James Braid, saw the germs of truth which lay hidden and obscured in the writings of Mesmer and the animal magnetisers.[1] Braid attempted to explain by

[1] The brave attempts of Drs. Elliotson and Esdaile to rescue the natant science of hypnotism from the region of quackery and charlatanism should not be overlooked, but in this sketchy account there is not room for more than just this mention of their names and the following bare facts concerning them. John Elliotson, M.D., F.R.S., was born in 1791, and was physician to the University College Hospital, when a Frenchman, Du Potet, came over to England and converted him to a belief in mesmerism or hypnotism. Elliotson had a very good reputation in his profession, but he could not overcome their prejudice so far as to inquire impartially into the existence of this new force, and he even found himself compelled to retire from the University College Hospital. His ardent and unwise advocacy of the unknown and unpopular science practically ruined his career. He died in 1868. James Esdaile, M.D., a Scotchman, was born in 1808. He graduated as M.D. in the University of Edinburgh in 1830, and went out the following year to Calcutta in the service of the East India Company. His attention was drawn to the subject of 'mesmerism' by reading the statements of Elliotson on it. He made his first experiment in 1845 on a Hindu, who had to undergo a painful double operation. Esdaile was successful in soothing the patient into an anæsthetic sleep by 'mesmeric passes,' during which the operation was painlessly performed. The Indian Government approving of the doctor's method, he was fortunately enabled to do much good work in this new line. 'He left a record of over 250 operations, painlessly performed by the aid of mesmerism, including such major cases as lithotomy, amputations, and the removal of large tumours in elephantiasis.'—*The Practice of Hypnotic Suggestion*, by G. C. Kingsbury, M.A., M.D., p. 9.

physiological laws the effect produced by the mesmerists, and discovered that a similar state, which he designated *hypnotic*, could be induced by the steady gaze at a bright object (a metal disc or the neck of a bottle, etc.) as effectively as by their 'passes' and magnets. To this Manchester doctor is really due the credit of having laid the foundations of modern hypnotism, for, although the latter indirectly owes its origin to the discredited mesmerism, its fundamental principles were discovered by Braid and given to the world in his writings. For an account of his theory of hypnotism I will quote from an article on the subject by Dr. J. Milne Bramwell, published in the *Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research*:[1]

'Braid held that mesmeric and hypnotic phenomena were due neither to volition on the part of the operator, nor to his possession of any mysterious force or fluid, but were mainly due to the physical changes that took place in the subject. These, which consisted in the exhaustion of certain nerve-centres with resulting decrease in the functional activity of

[1] Part xxxi. vol. xii., December 1896, p. 205.

the central nervous system, arose from the continued monotonous stimulation of other nerves—*e.g.* those of the eye by means of fixed gazing, those of the skin by passes with contact.'

In 1843, Braid published his principal work,[1] but, with the exception of a few medical men—and men of note too, as, for instance, Sir William Hamilton, Sir David Brewster, Sir James Simpson, Dr. Gregory, and Dr. Carpenter—the profession generally did not take to hypnotism, and the discovery of chloroform further helped to throw the advantages of hypnotic anæsthesia into the shade. Braid's labours were, however, not fruitless, for it was chiefly owing to a study of his *Neurypnology* that Liébeault set out in his investigations and experiments in the line which eventually won him such well-deserved fame, and which was practically the impulse to the study of this new science abroad—a study which has borne such abundant results.[2]

[1] *Neurypnology, or the Rationale of Nervous Sleep.*

[2] Braid's theories respecting hypnotism were first introduced into France in 1859 by Dr. Azam.

On the Continent the therapeutic use of hypnotism, and the subject of mental treatment generally, has received far more attention than with us. In England there undoubtedly exists a very deep-rooted antipathy, nay, even suspicion, of hypnotic methods, although of late years the medical faculty has regarded this new branch of their science with somewhat increasing favour, and accorded it the systematic attention and study it deserves.

Concerning the foreign schools of hypnotism, only a brief mention can be made here of the principal ones—namely, the Nancy School, which has already been alluded to in connection with its founder, Liébeault, and the Paris or Salpêtrière School, of which Charcot is the leader. The chief points of difference between these two French schools may be briefly described.

The followers of the Nancy School, of whom Bernheim is now the acknowledged representative, maintain that hypnotism is not a neurotic condition;[1] that it is a condition very much

[1] Professor Forel states: 'Every mentally healthy man is naturally hypnotisable.' Professor Moll: 'Intelligent people,

akin to drowsiness, ordinary sleep, or somnambulism, according to its intensity; and that men, women, and children are amenable to its influence. They hold that hypnotism is due to the mental action of suggestion, and that monoideism (the concentration of attention on one idea) is the main factor. Finally, they declare that hypnotism is not dangerous, and its employment does not lead to hysterical tendencies or cause a weakening of the mental state of the patient treated.[1]

The Paris School, on the other hand, declares hypnotism to be a disease of the nervous system; consequently the hypnotic condition can only be produced in morbid, hysterical persons, persons whose nerves are disordered. Charcot even argues that hypnotism and hysteria are identical in character. Again,

and those with strong wills, are more easily hypnotisable than the dull, the stupid, or the weak-willed.'

[1] Professor Forel writes: 'Liébeault, Bernheim, Wetterstrand, van Eeden, de Jong, Moll, I myself, and other followers of the Nancy School, declare categorically that, although we have seen many thousands of hypnotised persons, we have never observed a single case of mental or bodily harm caused by hypnosis, but, on the contrary, have seen many cases of illness relieved or cured by it.'

disagreeing with the Nancy observers, the 'Paris' scientists ascribe the hypnotic phenomena to physiological (cerebral) conditions; they believe suggestion plays only a minor part, and is not, in fact, always an essential to the production of the hypnotic state.[1] This state, Charcot and his following maintain, is brought about by physical means, as *e.g.* by pressing or kneading certain nerves, contractions and other movements are caused on the corresponding muscles of the body. This school also holds that some inanimate objects —*e.g.* magnets—are capable of producing many phenomena practically identical with the 'mesmeric.'

Another radical and very important point of difference between this and the Nancy School is that the Paris considers hypnotism dangerous in that it engenders hysteria; but as the Salpêtrière experiments in hypnotic phenomena have avowedly been confined to hysterical subjects, Charcot and his *confrères* are hardly

[1] According to this school suggestibility is a symptom, not a factor.

entitled to deliver a verdict on the question at large.[1]

Dr. Lloyd Tuckey, in summing up the merits and characteristics of these two schools, concludes thus: 'The Nancy School may therefore be called practical and therapeutic, in distinction from Charcot's, which is theoretical and experimental.'[2]

Having thus briefly reviewed the rise of modern hypnotism and its nature, the question which presents itself is—what diseases have so far proved themselves amenable to mental treatment?

As is fairly well known, hysteria can simulate almost any known disease and its symptoms. It is therefore more than probable that when faith-healers, or others of that ilk, boast of having cured a case of a reputed organic nature, or a disease which is not subject to the influence of emotional or mental agencies,

[1] 'Charcot has only studied *hysterical hypnotism*, and this being so, it is not altogether a matter for surprise that he comes to the conclusion that it is dangerous, and of no practical value; that hypnotism is in itself a neurosis.'—*The Practice of Hypnotic Suggestion*, G. C. Kingsbury, p. 55.

[2] *Op. cit.*, p. 53.

the diagnosis (if indeed there has been a *bonâ fide* expert diagnosis) has been a mistaken one, and hysteria was the chief factor. 'Be it noted that the great goddess Hysteria can sometimes deceive Æsculapius, and that in such a contest of wits the expertry is not always on the side of the profession.'[1]

Another disease producer or simulator is hypochondriasis, 'to which,' writes an author already frequently referred to,[2] 'intelligent and highly educated persons of sedentary habits brooding over their sensations are liable, especially if they are accustomed to read medical works and accounts of diseases and of their treatment. Dyspepsia,' he continues, 'has various forms, and indigestion can produce symptoms of organic heart disease, while diseases of the liver have often been mistaken by eminent physicians for pulmonary consumption.'

Referring to the works of medical authorities and to the periodical medical publications, we

[1] *Mind Cure, Faith Cure, and the Miracles of Lourdes*, A. T. Myers, M.D., and F. W. H. Myers.

[2] Dr. Buckley.

find instances recorded of either partial or complete recovery effected by mental agency from a great number of disorders of a functional nature.

This mental agency has consisted in some cases of therapeutic suggestion made to the patient, the latter being generally in a hypnotic state;[1] in others, the mental action which has operated has been either some strong religious impulse, or an accidental emotional disturbance, such as fear, fright,[2] or sudden and delirious joy.

The class of ailments amenable to the methods we are discussing includes principally those of a neurotic character or origin, and to such chronic

[1] 'It is certain,' writes Dr. Lloyd Tuckey, 'that suggestion has a twenty-fold greater influence in the hypnotic than in the waking state.'—*Op. cit.*, p. 78.

[2] I read quite lately the following simple fright cure in a daily paper. A lady, apparently a hopeless paralytic, and quite helpless, was being wheeled out in a bath chair. Her attendant having left her for a few moments, a drunken man passing by attempted to embrace her. Instantly the paralytic sprang out of her chair and ran away with the full use of her limbs. 'Had this stimulus been a religious instead of a secular one,' is the comment which rounds up the anecdote, 'it would have been claimed as a wonderful faith-cure.'—*Westminster Gaz.*, Feb. 14, 1898.

complaints[1] as gout, rheumatism,[2] sciatica, etc., especially are they applicable.

Some instances of the above class may be mentioned: contracted joints and limbs (which ailment often takes the form of lameness popularly pronounced incurable[3]), hysterical affections of the joints (which is a complaint common in the leisured classes, especially hysterically stiff knees[4]), some forms of paralysis (technically known as 'ideal paralysis'[5]), cer-

[1] In many instances it seems to give the patient a fresh start, and puts the system in a condition favourable to the action of other remedies.—Dr. L. Tuckey, *op. cit.*, p. 59.

[2] 'Rheumatism and gouty pains often yield to the suggestive method, as do also many diseases of mal-nutrition, such as anæmia and "general debility."'—*Ib.* p. 57.

'I have seen rheumatic pains entirely vanish after five minutes' hypnosis.'—*The Practice of Hypnotic Suggestion*, Geo. C. Kingsbury, M.D., p. 32.

[3] The writer knows of a 'Christian Science' cure of such a case which is one of the most persuasive marvels of the Bryanston Street 'Scientists.'

[4] Dr. Tuke writes (*op. cit.*, p. 72): 'Hysterical affections of the joints are good examples of morbid conditions arising from the imagination, but are usually more or less emotional states.' Sir B. Brodie observes: 'The symptoms may frequently be traced to the circumstances of the patient's *attention* having been anxiously directed to a particular joint.'

[5] 'Suggestion is very successful in some cases of old standing paralysis, and especially so in the infantile variety.'—Dr. L. Tuckey, *op. cit.*, p. 57.

tain forms of epilepsy and convulsions, pleurisy, dropsy, 'benign' tumours, and similar functional maladies.

Dr. Carpenter specially mentions gout and scurvy as disorders which, depending upon the existence of a definite perversion in the condition of the blood, are susceptible to the influence of mental states as well as those of a purely neurotic origin. Dr. Hack Tuke also refers to these diseases, and both he and Dr. Carpenter relate the celebrated story of the cure of scurvy among the troops in Breda during the siege of 1625.[1]

The Prince of Orange, fearing the necessity of capitulation in consequence of the virulence of the disease, smuggled a few small phials of a concoction of camomile, wormwood, and camphor into the town; then after having had it publicly announced that three or four drops of the wonderful mixture diluted in a gallon of liquor were sufficient to effect a cure, he caused the sufferers to be dosed with what was practically unmedicated water. The effect of

[1] *Mental Physiology*, W. B. Carpenter, p. 688; *Influence of the Mind upon the Body*, H. Tuke, p. 367.

the soldiers' faith in the Prince's remedy was most marvellous; 'for not only was the further spread of the disease checked, but a large proportion of those who were then suffering under it, including many who had been for some time completely invalided, recovered very rapidly.'

Several other remarkable illustrations are given by Dr. Tuke of recoveries from both scurvy and gout which were effected by some form or other of emotional excitement. Terror, he writes, has appeared to benefit even patients in consumption; and, according to an instance which he quotes from Tissot, good fortune, and consequent intense joy, has been known to cause the suspension of a pulmonary affection which had reached an advanced stage of phthisis.

With regard to consumption, Dr. Buckley states that it is a fact known to medical men 'that pulmonary consumption, genuine and unmistakable, often terminates spontaneously in recovery,[1] and frequently yields to hygienic

[1] Extracts from a paragraph on this subject in Messrs. Myers' Article on *Mind Cure*, etc., p. 199:—'Phthisis may be a disease

methods,' and he quotes the late Professor A. Flint of New York (author of a 'Clinical Report on Consumption') as describing sixty-two cases 'in which an arrest of the disease took place; in seven cases it occurred without any special medical or hygienic treatment, and in four of the seven he declares that recovery was complete.'

Had faith-healers had the good fortune to have undertaken any of these seven cases, which, as events proved, were cured by nature's own powers, change of environment or of habits of life, what credit would they not have gained?

Then, also, with regard to pulmonary consumption, it should be mentioned that the disease, or rather its progress, is frequently only arrested for a period. A patient suffering

which our art cannot cure, but it is by no means a disease which cannot cure itself.'

'Complete arrest of the disease' (say Drs. J. K. Fowler and E. Clifford Beale in the *Dictionary of Practical Medicine*) 'is occasionally observed under the most unfavourable circumstances, such cases falsifying every rule of prognosis.' One of the best French authorities, Professor Jaccoud, is quoted as insisting on the occasional abatement of the disease and on the difficulty sometimes experienced of determining whether phthisis is present or not until a post-mortem examination is made.

from it reaching a stage when the symptoms have abated, or it may be disappeared for the time, sanguinely believes himself cured; and if, instead of depending on medical skill, he is in the hands of a faith-healer or quack, he is generally encouraged by this one to proclaim his recovery promptly far and wide. Sometimes he will even be asked to testify in writing or on a public platform to what is practically claimed as a supernatural or divinely-wrought phenomenon. With the fervour of joy and gratitude, the quondam invalid is nothing loth to do so; and not infrequently he, in all sincerity of purpose, improves the marvel by an exaggerated or incomplete version of the affair. Then, in due course, the symptoms return, and the disease resumes its sway. The unhappy sufferer is not now, however, urged by his despair, as previously by his enthusiasm, to make this news public, and so the credit which the healer had gained is never withdrawn; for, needless to say perhaps, the latter is nowise eager to proclaim his failure and surrender it of his own accord.

Thus statistics on this question are apt to be based upon a large number of deceptive cases and partial evidence which, in the absence of examination, goes far to mislead.

Dr. Schofield, in the little volume already frequently mentioned in these pages, devotes a chapter to 'Examples of Faith-Healing,' of which the brief list given is prefaced with the following statement :—

'At the out-patient department of most hospitals hardly a day passes without real cures being effected in obstinate diseases, the means used being wholly inadequate, and some of these cases are very striking.'

The first case described is that of 'an intelligent woman' who called upon the writer and casually informed him that she had been cured of epilepsy by having a sprig of arbor vitæ sewed into the sole of each of her stockings.

The next one is that of a boy who had been confined to his bed for five years, having injured his spine in a fall. 'He had been all the time totally paralysed in his legs, and could not feel when they were touched or

pinched, nor could he move them in the least degree.' This case was psychically treated, the curative agents being the emotions of hope and fear, which acted with such success that the little patient was in two weeks' time 'running races in the park, and his cure was reported in the *Lancet*.'

Some of the other instances recorded by this writer are of cures from rheumatic fever, epileptic fits, whooping cough, gout, and dropsy; as impressive an array of proofs in illustration of the potency of methods other than those of the chemist's materia medica as any number of Mrs. Eddy's *Journal* can produce.

Generally speaking, it is for functional and not organic[1] diseases that mental treatment is efficacious, although the psychic forces control, affect, and alter the actual material of our bodies to an enormous extent. Sir James Paget wrote: 'There is scarcely an organ the nutrition of which may not be affected by the mind.'

[1] A *functional* disease is the disturbance of the right use of the part, and includes paralysis, nervous and mental troubles, etc. An *organic* disease is a definite injury or disease of any part or organ that can be, if accessible, seen and handled.

At the beginning of this chapter it was stated that the action of the commonly called mind-cure is concerned with the substrata of the mental system, and that the various parts of the body are affected and controlled by its psychic forces. It will be well then to describe here as shortly as possible how this action operates, quoting for this purpose from the two following papers: 'The Relation of Suggestion to Health,' written recently by Dr. Lloyd Tuckey for the Society for Psychical Research, and 'The Treatment by Suggestion, with and without Hypnosis,' contributed by Dr. John F. Woods to the *Journal of Mental Science*.[1]

Without an elementary knowledge of cerebral physiology it is, however, impossible to apprehend the action of suggestion; and to the general reader, shy of technicalities, this must be my apology for the following brief summary.

The brain consists of 'white matter' and 'grey matter.' Part of this 'grey matter,' which is technically termed the 'cortex,' is, as its name implies, the external part; it is

[1] April 1897.

the most highly developed portion of the brain, and forms the convolutions. The 'cortex' is composed of an infinite number[1] of brain cells, each of which (cells) may be considered the terminal representative of a muscular fibre or organic cell. Experiment has proved that certain areas of the 'cortex' control the movements of definite groups of muscles, and these are called centres: for instance, there is a centre for the movements of the arm, leg, mouth, spine, etc. These different centres are connected with each other by nerve filaments, and are associated in consciousness. These filaments, which are the most diminutive fibres, are divided into two classes—the incarrying (afferent) and the outcarrying (efferent).

The brain areas connected with the higher emotions and the intellectual faculties have not been localised, but it is nevertheless found convenient to speak of *ideational centres* which, as Professor James says, 'contain nothing but arrangements for representing impressions and

[1] Bain and Meynert independently calculated the number of nerve-cells in the cortex of the human cerebrum to be a thousand millions.

movements, and other arrangements for coupling the activity of these arrangements together.'[1]

Impressions auditory, visual, etc., arrive at the 'cortical centres' from the sense organs, and are arranged and subjected to intellectual processes in the 'ideational centres.' These latter transmit through the motor centres appropriate orders to the muscles, and these are put into action accordingly. Suggestion, therefore, acting on the *ideational centres*, enables us to control and influence the entire organism.

The action of suggestion on the brain centres is, as has been already stated, greatly intensified when the subject is in an hypnotic state, and this is so for the following reason.

The process of hypnotism reduces the patient first from his normal condition, which is one of poly-ideism,[2] to one of mono-ideism,[3] and finally to a state of vacuity in which the mind is a blank.

[1] Vide *Principles of Psychology*, vol. i. p. 64.

[2] Poly-ideism is, as the name implies, a state in which ideas or informations are received from all the avenues of sense, and these balance and control each other.

[3] Mono-ideism is a state in which all the senses but one are inhibited.

Dr. Tuckey, in describing these stages and the phenomena of hypnotism, compares the mind to a room lighted by several windows, these latter representing the several senses. When all these windows are open the general illumination produced represents normal consciousness, and, in this equal light, each sense has its proper share. Close all these windows, however, and admit light only by some hole in one of the shutters, and the ray thus admitted into the darkened chamber assumes a greatly increased intensity and an exaggerated relative importance, for it is not opposed by, or associated with, other rays.

According to the law discovered by Hughlings Jackson, *all parts of the body* are represented in the highest cortical centres, which centres constitute the physical basis of mind.

When I speak of the physical basis of mind, I intend neither to deny nor ignore the existence in our entity of certain psychical elements, but our conceptions of such must necessarily be vague so long as our powers of observation are physically limited. We must

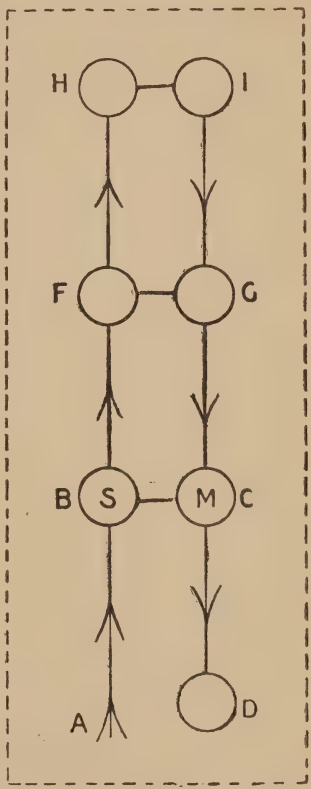
be content to conceive dimly of life, of death, of the soul, nor expect of any system that it should furnish a final and exhaustive solution of those metaphysical problems which most nearly concern us. And yet, so long as we retain the characteristically human tendency to speculation, to aspiration, so long shall we attempt to forge a chain between our thoughts, the friction of our brain molecules, our nerve tension and our actions. 'Man is not born to solve the mystery of Existence,' wrote Goethe, 'but he must, nevertheless, attempt it, in order that he may learn how to keep within the limits of the Knowable.'

For a description of our nervous mechanism I will quote from Dr. Woods' paper :—

'Every non-nervous part of the body is connected afferently[1] and efferently[2] with centres in the spinal cord and base of the brain. Take, for instance, a limited portion of muscle or gland substance. This is provided with an afferent nerve (*AB*) furnished with a suitable end-organ (*A*) adapted to receive nerve im-

[1] *Afferent*—bringing or conducting inwards or towards.
[2] *Efferent*—conveying outwards—discharging.

pressions, an efferent nerve (*CD*) terminating in the muscle or gland (*D*), a receptive or sensory ganglion cell (*B*) placed in connection with a motor ganglia cell (*C*), whose function it is to send impulses down the efferent fibre (*CD*) to the muscle or gland (*D*). The two ganglia cells (*BC*) constitute a so-called *sensori-motor*, or better, *affero-efferent centre*, and we must suppose that all non-nervous parts of the body are provided with such affero-efferent centres, these collectively constituting the so-called lowest nervous level.



As evolution proceeds, we have higher and

higher nervous levels superimposed; each higher level growing out of the one next below it, and the highest constituting the anatomical substratum of mind. Thus, referring again to one limited patch of tissue, with its nervous system (*ABCD*), we must suppose a higher arc, *BFGC*, to develop in connection with it, constituting the next highest level; and again, that from this last, a yet higher arc, *FGHI*, is developed, constituting the highest level (for we may, for convenience, limit the nervous levels to three). On this hypothesis *HI* constitutes the physical basis of mind; and whatever sensations are felt in connection with our limited patch of tissue, and whatever dynamical effects are produced in it, as a result of mental action, will be produced through *HI*. According to this hypothesis, all the non-nervous parts of the body are provided with a similar nervous apparatus, all of them being thus definitely represented in the cortex, *i.e.* every minute part of the body has a definite part of the cortex belonging to it, through which it feels, and through which, moreover, it can be dynamically affected.'

The action of suggestion is on the ultimate nervous elements which consist of cortical cells and their prolongations. These nervous elements are technically known as 'neurones,' and they are believed to be so arranged that they readily form combinations or 'sets.' These 'sets' correspond with habits of thought and their accompanying actions.

Bodily conditions are registered in consciousness, and the result is a corresponding 'set' or arrangement of these 'neurones.' Under ordinary circumstances this 'set' relapses to its normal condition with the disappearance of the physiological cause of its disturbance; *but in some instances it is so strongly impressed in consciousness, that although the cause of its mal-arrangement has disappeared, it remains in its abnormal state.* Under such circumstances the 'set' acts on the bodily parts and causes a nervous continuance of the original trouble.

The case of an hysterical knee was described by Dr. Tuckey as a good illustration of these neuro-physiological inter-workings.

Thus: a knee is injured; tenderness, swelling, and stiffness of the joint ensue, with more

or less pain on movement. These symptoms are registered in consciousness, and a corresponding 'set' of the neurones is the result. Under ordinary conditions, as the inflammation subsides the 'set' of the neurones tends to fall back into their old arrangement, which is associated in consciousness with a supple and painless joint. *It happens sometimes, however, that the nervous arrangement does not change with the disappearance of the cause, and the idea of pain and disability continues or becomes fixed in the mind.* To overcome this trouble, the mind must be operated upon by some kind of stimulus to readjust the faulty 'set' of the neurones.

It can be easily understood now how hysterical paralysis and hysterically contracted joints are caused and cured.

The fact is, most medical men treat their patients with mental doses far more commonly than is suspected; but if they confessed to Mr. A. or to Mrs. B. that the carefully labelled bottle the chemist sends in contained only coloured water, and the pills were innocent of anything but flour, the effect of their pre-

scriptions would be *nil*, for people have confidence in medicines, and are very generally ignorant in psycho-therapeutics.

'How many unhoped for, sudden, and prodigious cures have been effected by imagination,' wrote Salverte. 'Our medical books are filled with facts of this nature which would easily pass for miracles.'[1]

[1] *Philosophie des Sciences occultes, ou essai sur la magie, les prodiges et les miracles chez les anciens*: Paris, 1829.

CHAPTER V

ON TESTIMONY

'The reliability of testimony depends not only upon the conveyance of the information being correctly performed, but also upon its having been correctly obtained; not only upon the veracity of the witness, but also upon his cognisance of the matter in hand.'—A. F. RAVENSHEAR in *Mind*.

THE subject of testimony may now be considered, and the extent to which the accounts given by lay persons of the cure of their diseases and the specification of the latter can be accepted without verification.

To put it mildly, the statement of a person altogether ignorant of medical science is *unsatisfactory* as regards these two points of information. Surely some special knowledge is necessary to determine the nature of most ailments, especially when these are of an internal character, since, not only do such often perplex experienced practitioners, but they are

not infrequently mistakenly diagnosed by them.[1]

Before, however, discussing this particular kind of testimony, a few remarks on the subject generally will not be irrelevant. It is almost a truism to say that in our recollections those circumstances usually only adhere whereon our attention is particularly directed, or which, for some reason or other, make a strong impression upon us. Now such facts

[1] Remarks on the subject of mistakes in expert diagnosis, and an instance of such by Dr. Milne Bramwell: 'In reference to the alleged miraculous cure of disease, two questions might fairly be asked—Have all possible errors of diagnosis been excluded? and could the cures have resulted from means other than miraculous? Some years ago, one of my patients had his eyes injured. One had to be removed, while the sight of the other was considered entirely lost, and a certificate to this effect given by a skilled ophthalmic surgeon. He considered the loss of sight due to complete detachment of the retina, and was so convinced of this that, previous to an operation on the other eye, he proposed to remove this one as useless, and a possible source of danger to the success of the operation. After twelve months of blindness, the patient commenced to see a little, and speedily recovered complete power of vision. At this time he was having no treatment; but had the cure occurred during a visit to Lourdes it would have been deemed miraculous, and, to disprove this, in the face of the medical evidence, would have been almost impossible. An effusion of lymph into the vitreous humour had been mistaken for detached retina.'—*Journal of the S.P.R.*, No. CI. vol. vi. June 1893, p. 97.

are not only often quite immaterial, comparatively, but they may even prove misleading, *for they are seen unconnected and out of all true proportion to the question at issue*; and, being unmodified by attendant circumstances, which have been overlooked but which bear upon them, they lead to incorrect conclusions.

'It is universally recognised that however careful and conscientious a person may be, yet the effect of interest may be to lead him unwittingly into error throughout the acquisition, the retention, and the conveyance of information. To be free from such unseen influence in completeness is the unattainable ideal; but practical freedom from bias with regard to some particular matter is not so far out of reach. This relative *freedom from bias* is, then, one of the conditions that an assertor must conform to in order to be trustworthy.'[1]

As an instance of the common inaccuracy of statements when such are required to prove some fact or case, and of the bold way in which a story grows out of all recognition, I

[1] 'Testimony and Authority,' by A. F. Ravenshear; *Mind*, January 1899.

will quote a dual account from Dr. J. M. Buckley's book *Faith-Healing, Christian Science, and Kindred Phenomena*:—

'The children were jumping off from a bench, and my little son fell and broke both bones of his arm below the elbow. My brother, who is a professor of surgery in the college at Chicago, was here on a visit. I asked him to set and dress the arm. He did so: put it in splints, bandages, and in a sling. The dear child was very patient, and went about without a murmur all that day. The next morning he came to me and said, "Dear papa, please take off these things."—"Oh no, my son; you will have to wear these five or six weeks before it will be well!"—"Why, papa, it is well."—"Oh no, my dear child; that is impossible!"—"Why, papa, you believe in prayer, don't you?"—"You know I do, my son."—"Well, last night when I went to bed, it hurt me very bad, and I asked Jesus to make it well." I did not like to say a word to chill his faith. A happy thought came. I said, "My dear child, your uncle put the things on, and if they are taken off, he must

do it." Away he went to his uncle, who told him he would have to go as he was six or seven weeks, and must be very patient; and when the little fellow told him that Jesus had made him well, he said, "Pooh! pooh! nonsense!" and sent him away. The next morning the poor boy came to me, and pleaded with so much sincerity and confidence, that I more than half believed, and went to my brother and said, "Had you not better undo his arm and let him see for himself? Then he will be satisfied. If you do not, I fear, though he is very obedient, he may be tempted to undo it himself, and then it may be worse for him." My brother yielded, took off the bandages and the splints, and exclaimed, "It is well, absolutely well!" and hastened to the door to keep from fainting.'

Dr. J. H. Lloyd of the University of Pennsylvania carefully investigated the above, and obtained a statement in writing from the 'poor boy' himself, which he published in the *Philadelphia Medical Record.* The communication he received was as follows:—

'DEAR SIR,—The case you cite, when robbed

of all its sensational surroundings, is as follows: The child was a spoiled youngster, who would have his own way; and when he had a *green stick* fracture of the fore-arm, and after having had it bandaged for several days, concluded he would much prefer going without a splint; to please the spoilt child the splint was removed, and the arm carefully adjusted in a sling. As a matter of course, the bone soon united, as is customary in children, and being only partially broken, of course all the sooner. This is the miracle. Some nurse or crank or religious enthusiast, ignorant of matters physiological and histological, evidently started the story, and unfortunately my name—for I am the party—is being circulated in circles of faith-curites, and is given the sort of notoriety I do not crave.—Very respectfully yours,

'Carl H. Reed.'[1]

It is only fair to ask now: Is it likely that enthusiasts, who are naturally anxious for practical demonstrations or proofs of the truth of their theories, will be just these *rarae aves* who have attained that ideal freedom from

[1] See *Philadelphia Medical Record* of March 27, 1886.

bias when matters of such vital importance as their cures are concerned?

Besides which, do not the majority of invalids take an exaggerated view as to their conditions, and, when they have been marvellously cured, does not their enthusiasm and, perhaps, a little vainglory often incline them to enlarge on the hopelessness of their previous state? Is there not also an inborn tendency in the generous human mind to amplification, of which some account should be taken? What a familiar phrase, for instance, is 'given up by eminent physicians' or 'noted specialists' in the published accounts which advertise the merits and the successful cures wrought by Mrs. Eddy's practitioners, or by some patent pill!

But how many of these published instances, generally vague and careless as to detail, could bear to be tried by the nice weights and measures of truth?

The reader is referred to chapter iv. of Dr. Schofield's book, which recounts his experiences in the investigations of a number of cases. I wish some of these instances could be quoted

here, but space forbids, and I can only say that they did not stand the test to which they were subjected.

As this professional author says: 'Every published case ought to be accompanied by regular medical certificates, accurately stating what change has occurred, with all needful details.' It must surely be granted that unverified statements are valueless as evidence, and the honest inquirer should not accept them guilelessly and unquestioningly.

'Eminent physicians' are generally mentioned in connection with the illnesses which have been overcome by the ministrations of faith-healers and quacks; but, when inquiries are made as to these often mythical medical authorities, they have either practically not existed, or their verdict has been very different to the one reported.

An instance of this untrustworthiness of statement may here be given.

Last January, I addressed a letter of inquiry to a lady in America (absolutely unknown to me), who had contributed a 'testimony' of the cure of her 'cripple brother' to the November

number of the *Christian Science Journal.* This lady was asked if she would kindly authenticate the account given in the journal, and give the name and address of the 'noted specialist' mentioned in the testimony, or those of any of the other physicians who were consulted in the case.

The journal described the 'claim' thus: 'Tuberculosis of the bone, which was pronounced incurable by family physicians, and amputation was seemingly the only thing left us; and one noted specialist declared that that would do no good, claiming the disease was of the blood, and amputation would result in a breaking out of the disease on a different part of the body.'

The lady's kind reply to the letter of inquiry shall now be quoted :—

'There was no one "noted" specialist consulted, but many claiming to be specialists. I cannot give the address of all,[1] as I do not remember them. In Cincinnati, Ohio, we consulted a Dr. Johnson; now I do not know

[1] The writer therefore thought it unnecessary to give the names and addresses of any of these physicians.

his address, and I believe (he) has left Cincinnati for a wider field.'

I know personally of other 'testimonies' which, when investigated, proved equally unsatisfactory and inaccurate, and having come across such in my limited experience, I am naturally disinclined to accept the loose and verbose accounts of wonder-cures which come out monthly in the *Christian Science Journal* without some suspicion. This mass of so-called evidence requires careful sifting, and the facts adduced must be run to ground before they are of any value as proofs. I have chosen a few specimens of these published 'testimonies' at hap-hazard from the recent numbers of the journal, which I give in the Appendix, and here will only submit one sample of a 'Christian Science' demonstration which, when looked into, assumed the most natural proportions.

Mrs. Eddy's followers, not content with overcoming the ills of the flesh, profess themselves able to control the elements—but another form of non-existent matter—even to that one most uncontrollable of all, namely, fire.

Hearing an account from one of the London lights of the Bryanstone Street cult of a conflagration, over which she professed to have successfully demonstrated, I was at the trouble myself to investigate the house and inquire carefully into the circumstances. The latter had been enormously, but doubtless unwittingly, exaggerated, and the so-called flames which, according to the narrative, licked along the walls had been easily extinguished by wet cloths without the interposition of any supernatural agency. This information I had from an eyewitness on whom the catastrophe, though of very recent date, had apparently made but little impression.

The original story was inaccurate in many more or less important details: the walls of the room, which were described as old panelling papered over, proved on tapping to be solid plaster; the fire, furthermore, had only scorched a narrow strip of wall on one side of the fireplace, the mischief having originated with the short curtains hanging from the mantel-shelf; these had been drawn in by the draught, and being of a woolly material, they were not

dangerously inflammable. I may add that these very curtains were still hanging when I saw the room, and I found the fire had not injured more than their edges.

The lady of the house, a devout and whole-hearted 'Christian Scientist,' who herself 'treated' this fire, no doubt believed absolutely in its having yielded to her metaphysical meditations; her excitement and enthusiasm, carrying her away, caused the circumstances to assume very exaggerated proportions; and I am only convinced by this experience that the most straightforward and well-meaning people are frequently blindly self-deceived, and consequently incapable of correctly observing circumstances, when their minds are possessed by some dominating conviction, and they are absorbed in a belief to which they unconsciously make everything subservient. It is a deplorable fact that numbers of highly educated and intelligent people, when thus possessed by an overpowering conviction, do not stop to inquire or to sift evidence; they, on the contrary, eagerly accept anything consistent with their cherished theories, and utterly fail to distinguish between

the hallucinations of their own biassed fancy and actual phenomena. In greater or lesser degree, this is, of course, a universal failing, but one which should be taken into account when treating of cause and effect, and when the issue is of real importance.

That 'Christian Scientists' have obtained a large number of cures, and some of these very remarkable ones, by their methods, I, as before stated, do not deny, but these successful results must be attributed to the following causes:—

1. The suggestions induced in the patient of health and of cure.

2. The training received by the patient in therapeutic auto-suggestions, which keeps the thoughts and emotions in a health-inducing state.

I believe, in fact, that the large measure of success obtained by the 'Christian Science' methods *is chiefly due to this training*; for, as the writer of an article on 'Mind as Disease-Producer' in a recent review expresses it, 'consciousness, perturbed or serene, continuously plays upon the body for good or evil; and it is capable of conducing to health and

disease, of causing disease, of co-operating with it, and of facilitating its departure.'[1]

No one who has at all studied the question will, I think, have any doubt but that these mind-healers frequently obtain very satisfactory and sometimes astounding results with such ailments as are chiefly due to nervous derangement by their various methods. Discussing this subject in *An Examination of Christian Science*, Dean Hart[2] writes as follows of mental practitioners and their works :—

'If any cure be effected, it has nothing to do with the truth or untruth of the particular theory of the professor ; it is simply that by his methods the mind is stimulated to reassert itself. Success greatly, nay, often entirely, depends upon the disposition of the mind of the patient, the nerval susceptibility, and the strength of the expectation. If these be favourable, then a perusal of Mrs. Eddy's book is no small mesmerising condition. I have found that *Science and Health* is the

[1] 'Mind as Disease-Producer,' by Herbert Coryn. *National Review*, February 1898.

[2] Published by James Pott, New York, 1897. See pages 32, 51, 85.

best mode of inducing the mesmeric sleep I have ever experienced. The repetition of senseless sentences, with constantly changing signification of words, whose new meanings have to be gleaned from the context, produces a strange maze which dazes the mind and produces a mesmeric condition.

'The *modus operandi* of the "Christian Scientist" healer is to all intents and purposes that of the hypnotist. By the silence, the motionless sitting, the subdued voice, the cabalistic sentences—for they are senseless, and cannot excite the intelligence—the mind is soothed; then the suggestion is given, and in the denial of disease the repeated assertion of particular cure is pointedly made and impressed; thus directed, the mind exercises its power, all too little used, of stimulating nerval action, and so induces in the tissues the change which the thought desires.'

Another American writer, Mr. T. Jay Hudson, assigns great credit to these religious physicians as regards their mental treatment of health, and he says they are far in advance of the hypnotists and mesmerists in the instruc-

tion of their patients in this branch of psycho-therapeutics. 'They teach them how to help themselves. They organise them into classes, deliver lectures, and give minute instructions how to treat themselves, as well as how to treat others. Without knowing it, they in effect teach their patients the methods of auto-suggestion. Without having the remotest conception of the real principles which underlie their so-called "Science," they have somehow stumbled upon the machinery of mental therapeutics.'[1]

The claims this religious party puts forward to what is popularly understood as supernatural powers I therefore consider to be absolutely discredited by the facts and arguments which I have essayed to put clearly and fairly before the reader.

That this strange cult should have found acceptance with such numbers of earnest and spiritually-minded people of all classes is, I believe, due chiefly to their ignorance of the history of faith-healing and of the rudiments of mental therapeutics. This branch of the

[1] *Psychic Phenomena*, p. 175.

healer's art having been hitherto neglected by the legitimate practitioners, the potent curative force which has been discussed in these pages has been practically relegated to empirics and fanatics. Thus have these latter been able, thanks to their chance knowledge (sometimes, however, as with the 'Christian Scientists,' scarcely a conscious knowledge) of certain generally unrecognised truths, to take advantage of the prevalent ignorance on the relations of mind and matter, and, perhaps in all liberality, one should not blame them too severely for so doing.

In conclusion, I may quote from an article,[1] to which I have already referred, the comment that 'the existence of a crew of this kind is an inevitable, although it may be hoped transitory, result of any widespread popular attempt at cure by suggestion and self-suggestion.'

That this particular movement be but the 'transitory result' of a nascent popular recognition of the therapeutic importance of mental factors is indeed most sincerely to be

[1] Article by Dr. A. T. Myers and Mr. F. W. H. Myers, *Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research*, vol. ix. p. 175.

hoped, for those who hold Mrs. Eddy's extreme views with regard to medical methods may run a very serious risk of suffering for their delusion. It is in hopes of inciting some one else better fitted to do so to expose the false foundations or premisses whereon 'Christian Science' is based—and of thus saving some of its adherents from paying a severe penalty for their belief—that this book has been written. For all its shortcomings the writer claims forgiveness in the simple words of the chronicler of the Maccabees:—

'If I have written well and to the point, this is what I myself desired; but if meanly and indifferently, this is all I could attain unto.'

APPENDIX

MR. HAZZARD'S 'PRAYER FOR A DYSPEPTIC'

'Holy Reality! We BELIEVE in Thee that Thou art EVERYWHERE present. We *really* believe it. Blessed Reality, we do not pretend to believe, think we believe, believe that we believe. WE BELIEVE. Believing that Thou art everywhere present, we believe that Thou art in this patient's stomach, in every fibre, in every cell, in every atom, that Thou art the sole, only Reality of that stomach. Heavenly, Holy Reality, we *will* try not to be such hypocrites and infidels, as every day of our lives to affirm our faith in Thee and then immediately begin to tell how sick we are, forgetting that Thou art everything and that Thou art not sick, and therefore that nothing in this universe was ever sick, is now sick, or can be sick. Forgive us our sins in that we have this day talked about our backaches, that we have told our neighbours that our food hurts us, that we mentioned to a visitor that there was a lump in our stomach, that we have wasted our valuable time, which should have been spent in Thy service, in worrying for fear that our

stomach would grow worse, in that we have disobeyed Thy blessed law in thinking that some kind of medicine would help us. We know, Father and Mother of us all, that there is no such thing as a really diseased stomach; that the disease is the Carnal Mortal Mind given over to the World, the Flesh, and the Devil; that the mortal mind is a twist, a distortion, a false attitude, the HARMATIA of Thought. Shining and Glorious Verity, we recognise the great and splendid FACT that the moment we really believe the Truth, Disease ceases to trouble us; that the Truth is that there is no Disease in either *real* Body or Mind; that in the Mind what *seems* to be a *disease* is a False Belief, a Parasite, a hateful Excrescence, and that what happens in the Body is the shadow of the LIE in the Soul. Lord, help us to believe that ALL Evil is Utterly Unreal; that it is silly to be sick, absurd to be ailing, wicked to be wailing, atheism and denial of God to say, "I am sick." Help us to stoutly affirm with our hand in Your hand, with our eyes fixed on Thee, that we have no Dyspepsia, that we never had Dyspepsia, that we will never have Dyspepsia, that there is no such thing, that there never was any such thing, that there never will be any such thing. Amen.'

[The capitals and italics are in the original.]

ELEVEN 'TESTIMONIES,' FROM NOS. OF THE 'CHRISTIAN SCIENCE JOURNAL.'

EXTRACTS given in the *Christian Science Journal* for July 1898, 'from a letter telling of a cyclone that occurred the 11th of January 1888 at Fort Smith, Arkansas.'

(1) 'MY DEAR MRS. T.,—Mrs. D. has asked me to tell you a little about the cyclone here, especially of how the scientists protected themselves from the fury of the storm. To begin with, Mrs. D. and Mrs. G. slept serenely through it all, not knowing a word of the havoc until a messenger came to ask them to treat the members of one of our "Christian Science" families; this was about twelve at night, and the cyclone had been about eleven. It only lasted a few seconds, was succeeded by a fierce downpour of hail and rain, and then by perfect calm, the stars looking down peacefully on the strangely changed town. There was a general storm, not as violent as many we have had, but the path of the cyclone was narrow and unmistakable. The B.'s slept through it all, not knowing of the seeming terrors of the night until next morning, though a number of persons were killed in sight of their place. The scientists who were called upon to demonstrate life were Mrs. C. and her daughter, Mrs. P.; they, with Mr. P. and the four children, were sleeping in a two-story frame-house, which was thrown flat over their heads. The mother and daughter were pinioned under timbers; and both believe they would have

passed on, before assistance reached them, if they had not declared the Truth with might and main. Mrs. P. said she screamed aloud, "I am not in matter, I am in Spirit! Spirit cannot die, and matter has no life to lose!"

'Before this, as the house swayed, she had jumped out of bed, and as she lifted the baby, the chimney fell in the place where the little fellow had been. He escaped without a scratch.'

The rest of the account is in the same strain, but too long to quote here. It describes the happy faith of the P. family, the conversion of Mr. P., who had hitherto 'never conceded anything to Christian Science,' and the misfortunes of the 'non-Christian Science' neighbours, which misfortunes included the death of a dog and a canary-bird.

(2) On the following page is the account of 'an elderly lady' who was cured of 'a trouble in her arm and hand,' a bad temper, and the 'tobacco habit' of fifty years' standing. The 'trouble' is not specified; it was healed while she was thinking; but the strangest part of the affair is that the bandages seem to have mysteriously disappeared without her knowledge.

(3) 'To show how readily the innocent mind of a child reflects truth, I will tell of a beautiful demonstration made by a child five years of age, whose knowledge of "Christian Science" has been gained by attending our Sunday-school.

'The child seemed to have a severe cold, and his parents, who have not demonstrated science as thoroughly as the little one has, were becoming quite anxious, when the child went to his father and asked, "Papa, will you please read *Science and Health* to me? I am sure it will make me well." The father was busy, and heeded not the childish demand; but the little scientist was not to be thus deprived of the benefit he felt sure was to be gained therefrom, and so he took the book, and in his own innocent way read, "God is Love," and repeated the "Scientific Statement of Being." The next morning the cold had entirely disappeared, and Edward was well and happy.

'The above is but one of the many beautiful demonstrations the little one is making each day, proving that "God is Love."'—H. A. M., Saratoga Springs, N.Y.

['Notes from the Field,' June No. of *Christian Science Journal*, 1898.]

(4) 'One morning our baby was taken very suddenly with croup, and it seemed that his breath would not come much longer. My children and I were alone; I called to them—they were yet in bed—and asked them to "help mamma treat little brother."

'In fifteen minutes from the time he first commenced coughing, it was over, except his breath seemed to come a little hard. His sister came from her bed into the room, saying, "I'm all right this morning." Baby responded, "I'm all 'ite, too";

and then his breathing was perfectly natural. Nothing remained except a slight hoarseness. We know that "God is a very present Help in trouble."' —J. H., Pondcreek, Okla.

['Notes from the Field,' *Christian Science Journal*, June 1898.]

(5) 'I would like to tell of a demonstration of the power of Truth, in Cincinnati, for a lady ninety-one years of age. For two years there was a fiery lump on her neck, growing larger all the time, and very irritating. The family did not call a surgeon for fear she would not live through an operation. A friend called to see her, and suggested she should try "Christian Science." She consented, and a "Christian Scientist" was sent for. She was treated for six weeks with apparently no change. Then one morning she awoke and found her clothing and the bed covered with blood. The manifestation was disappearing without lance or surgeon, and in two weeks it was entirely gone, not even a scar to be seen. She gives to "Christian Science" all the credit.'— Laura C——, Mount Auburn, Cincinnati.

[*Christian Science Journal*, June 1898.]

(6) 'Inflammatory rheumatism, neuralgia, blood-poisoning, and an old chronic complication which physicians could not cure, as well as many other claims of less severity, have all disappeared through "Christian Science" treatment.

'The greatest of all was paralysis. When I dis-

covered that I was not capable of treating myself, I called a faithful healer, and also leader of our Society in this place, to treat me. He came three days, and error still held me in bondage. The fourth day he treated me till noon, when I was released almost instantly. Mortal thought had given place to Truth, and Truth had set me free.'—Mrs. Josie T. Griswold, Chanute, Kan.

[*Christian Science Journal*, p. 217, June 1898.]

(7) 'I first heard of "Christian Science" in 1889. At that time I was smoking fifteen cigars a day, and although I desired to quit, I felt as though I could not give them up. I finally concluded to have a Scientist treat me, and after three treatments I had no more desire for tobacco, but a great desire to know more about the Truth.'—Alfred Hossick, Carrollton, Mo.

[*Christian Science Journal*, June 1898.]

(8) 'On the morning of the dedication of the Chicago church, November 14, 1898, I was in my bedroom in the third story of our house. I was getting ready to go to morning service, and my little daughter, five years old, was playing about, when suddenly I felt a silence. I instantly noticed that the child was no longer there, and that the window was open.

'I looked out and saw her unconscious form on the ground below, her head on the cement sidewalk. Instantly I thought, "All is Love."

'As I went downstairs, the entire paragraph in *No and Yes*, p. 19, beginning, "Eternal harmony, perpetuity, and perfection constitute the phenomena of Being," came to me and took up its abode with me, and with it the clear sense of the great gulf fixed between the child and the lie that claimed to destroy. The child was brought in, and as she was carried upstairs she cried. As she was laid down the blood was spurting from her mouth, and had already covered her neck and shoulders. I instantly said, "There is one law—God's law—under which man remains perfect," and the bleeding immediately stopped.

'The child seemed to relapse into unconsciousness, but I declared, "Mind is ever present, and controls its idea," and in a few moments she slept naturally. During the morning she seemed to suffer greatly if she was moved at all, and her legs seemed paralysed—lifeless. In the afternoon all sense of pain left, she slept quietly, and I went to the afternoon service, rejoicing greatly in my freedom from the sense of personal responsibility.

'When I returned she sat in my lap to eat some supper, with no sense of pain, but still unable to control her limbs, which presented the appearance of entire inaction.

'At eight o'clock she was undressed without inconvenience, and there was no mark on her body but a bruised eye. During the day she had not spoken of herself. At eleven o'clock, when I went upstairs, I found her wide awake, and she said,

"Mamma, error is trying to say that I fell out of the window, but it cannot be. The child of God can't fall; but why do I lie here? Why can't I move my legs?"

'The answer was, "You can move them. Mind governs, and you are always perfect." In a moment she said, "I will get up and walk." It seemed to require one or two trials to induce her legs to obey; but she rose, walked across the room and back, climbed into bed, stretched her legs out, and said, "I knew error could not talk!"

She then sat up, ate a lunch, fell into a natural slumber, and woke bright and happy in the morning.

'For two days there was an uncertainty of movement, a seeming inability to walk in a straight line, but she moved about constantly, frequently rebuking the error aloud, and declaring, "Love helps me walk."

'On Wednesday, harmony was established. Some weeks after, her little sister said to her, "You did fall out of the window, didn't you?" But the reply was, "My body fell, but I am not in my body. Can God's child fall?"

'And the little three-year-old answered, "No, because God is good."'—C. E. M.

[*Christian Science Journal*, p. 259, July 1898.]

(9) 'I am always glad to hear of animals being helped. I find they respond very quickly to Truth.

'A white Pekin duck, unable to take a step, was given two treatments, when it was cured. My sister said she never knew one to get well before with such

a claim. One day, about eleven o'clock, the same sister came to me in great distress, declaring that her favourite colt was ruined, and insisted upon my going out to see him. On the way out I was realising the Truth, feeling that she might ask me to treat him, and when we got there I did not look at him at all, but turned to sister and asked her not to worry so over him, telling her that he would be all right. "No, indeed," she replied, "no power on earth can save him," or words to that effect. Then suddenly seeming to remember something, she asked, "Can *you* do anything for him?" I assured her that God's power was unlimited, and we could only look to Him.

'I took up the case at once, and late that afternoon she came bounding into the room where I was, her face radiant with delight. "Sister, he is all right—he is up, walking around." The claim was partial paralysis, caused by accident.'—M. J. S., Grifton, N.C.

[*Christian Science Journal*, September 1897.]

(10) 'For four years I had been a sufferer from a complication of diseases—dyspepsia, catarrh, sick and nervous headache, and rheumatism.

'I had been an active member of an orthodox church for years, and many an hour I had spent in prayer for my recovery, but all to no avail. I was getting worse all the time. I had the best help *materia medica* could give me, but nothing helped me, until in November 1896 I went to a Friday evening

meeting of "Christian Scientists." After listening to the reading of that precious book, *Science and Health, with Key to the Scriptures*, I learned that God was my life; that in Him I lived, moved, and had my being; that I had no need to suffer. I never had a treatment; but through the reading of *Science and Health* I became perfectly well, and am not only able to keep myself well, but also, through demonstrating the allness of God, I am able to help others out of darkness into the blessed Gospel light.

'I have also seen the power of Truth in the healing of my two children. My little boy had an attack of cholera infantum. The doctor was called in, my wife not being a scientist at that time, but the child was still getting worse, when the aid of "Christian Science" was called at 7.30 P.M. At midnight he was well. My little girl was healed of diphtheria by the power of Truth as taught in our textbook.'—ETHELBERT NIMELTON, Pottsville, Pa.

[*Christian Science Journal*, p. 369, August 1898.]

(11) 'An abscess on the lung of twelve years' standing, quick consumption, kidney trouble, weakness, nervous prostration, and dyspepsia have all been destroyed by the power of eternal Truth, and the "half has not been told," for many minor claims have been met, and sins that were being indulged have been uncovered and are fading away.'—D. M. S., Horton, Kan.

[*Christian Science Journal*, p. 142, May 1898.]

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